

Library of The Theological Seminary

PRINCETON • NEW JERSEY

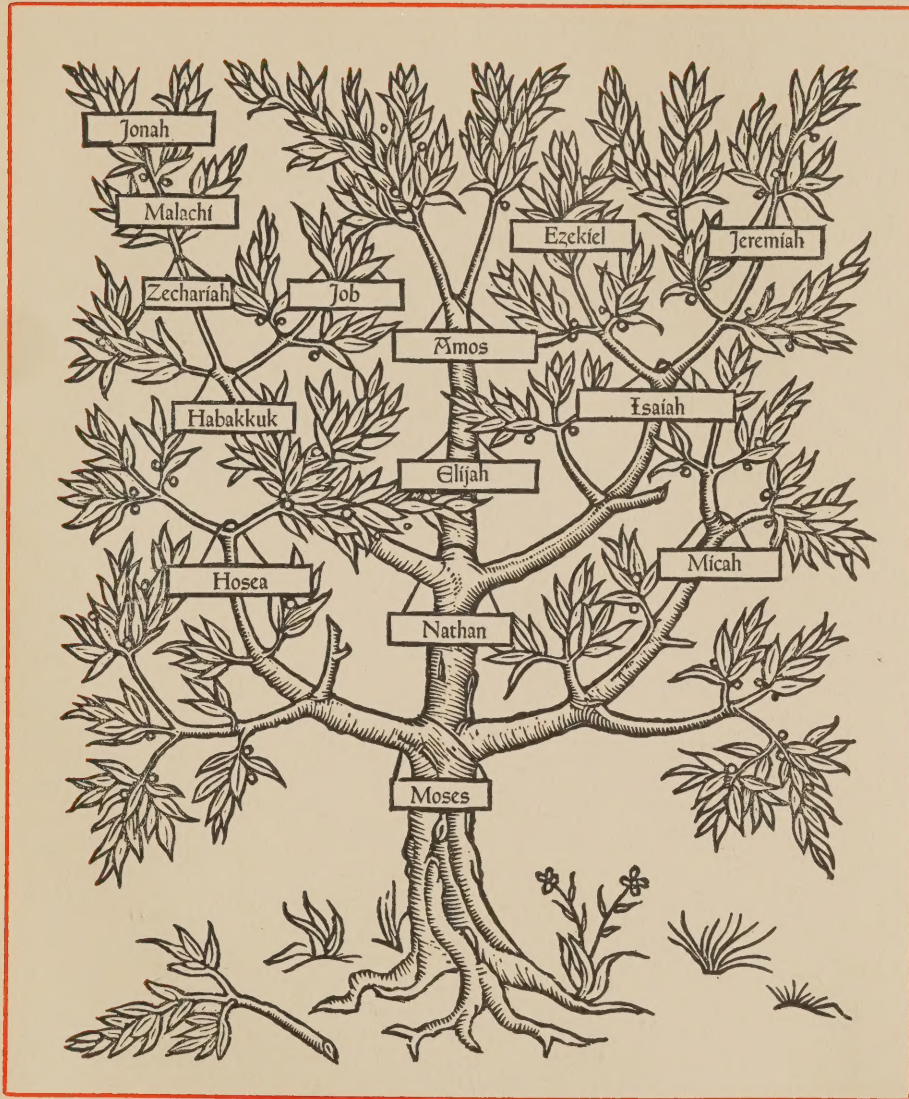


PRESENTED BY

BM 740 .R385
Reichert, Irving Frederick
1895-
Judaism & the American Jew

Judaism & the American Jew

SELECTED SERMONS & ADDRESSES
of IRVING FREDERICK REICHERT



SAN FRANCISCO : THE GRABHORN PRESS : mcmliii

COPYRIGHT 1953 BY IRVING F. REICHERT

TO MY WIFE MADELEINE

IN

DEVOTION & GRATITUDE

Foreword

THE SERMONS AND ADDRESSES *included in this volume may be considered typical of my preaching during a ministry of nearly eighteen years at Temple Emanu-El, San Francisco. They reflect my interpretation of Reform Judaism and its message for the American Jew.*

No attempt has been made to arrange these addresses systematically, topically, or chronologically. All of them contain fundamental ideas which, as in most preaching, were reiterated from time to time, although differently developed. After their original presentation in the Emanu-El pulpit, some of them were recast for delivery in universities, synagogues, churches, theological schools, and forums throughout the country.

Although history has resolved at least temporarily, some of the particular situations dealt with here and there, the emphasis throughout has been on values and principles that have more than temporary validity. This conviction, at any rate, has prompted me to comply gladly with the suggestion of many friends to publish this collection. I am deeply grateful to them for their support and encouragement, to Bishop Edward L. Parsons for his generous Introduction, and to Edwin Grabborn and his associates of the Grabborn Press for their distinguished collaboration.

IRVING F. REICHERT

San Francisco, California

December 1953.

Contents

FOREWORD	v
INTRODUCTION	ix
GETTING BACK TO FUNDAMENTALS	3
THE SPOKEN WORD AS PART OF THE WORSHIP	17
THE POLICY AND PROGRAM OF REFORM JUDAISM	25
ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES	39
IS SOCIAL PROGRESS FACT OR FICTION?	52
THE CONTAGION OF A SPIRITUAL PESTILENCE	63
THE DUTY OF HATING	68
THE FOOL HATH SAID IN HIS HEART	75
A FAITH TO LIVE BY	81
WHERE IS THY GOD?	85
THE HIGH COST OF PEACE	93
FUTILE WEAPONS	97
THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMMUNITY	101
MAN'S DEEPEST NEED—HUMILITY	106
MEMORIES AND HOPES	111
THE NEW YEAR AND THE NAZI TERROR	116
ONE REFORM RABBI REPLIES TO LUDWIG LEWISOHN	123

WHERE DO YOU STAND?	135
THE JEWS AND THE WORLD TODAY	144
JUDAISM IN ECLIPSE—THE DECLINE OF AN HISTORIC MISSION	155
SOME PRACTICAL WAYS OF APPRAISING CONDUCT	171
WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ORGANIZED RELIGION TODAY	177
RELEASING OUR LATENT ENERGIES	184
THE GOOD OLD DAYS	191
THE ILLUSION AND THE REALITY	196
SHORT-CUTS TO UTOPIA	203
WHEN A MAN TAKES RELIGION SERIOUSLY	208
HOW MUCH DO WE WANT LIBERTY?	213
THE JEWISH PROBLEM RECONSIDERED	219
HOW CAN WE FIND HAPPINESS IN THE NEW YEAR?	225
THE LIGHT THAT PREVAILED	231
THE REAL WASHINGTON	235
IF I WERE A CHRISTIAN PREACHER TODAY	241

INTRODUCTION

THERE ARE PRIVILEGES which only a long life can offer. If I may be permitted to make these introductory pages, which I have been honored by the invitation to write, very personal, one of the rare privileges which has come to me is that of knowing and counting as friend all but the first of the rabbis of the Temple Emanu-El in the long one hundred years of its history. Nearly sixty years ago when I was giving a small part of my time to teaching at Stanford, Rabbi Voorsanger came down regularly to lecture on the Old Testament. It was an inspiration to hear him and an honor when he took into the wide circle of his friends this young and new Californian who happened to know something of what biblical scholarship was doing. Of what Rabbi Voorsanger did for San Francisco I need not speak. The memory of his contribution lives among us. And that is true of his successors Rabbi Meyer and Rabbi Newman. Each was a significant figure in the life of the city, and I was happy to count each as friend and to cooperate with them in many ways.

In 1930 Rabbi Reichert came and it was immediately clear that he too would carry on the distinguished service rendered by his predecessors. San Francisco looked to him with confidence and was not disappointed. By untiring effort, by the spoken word and the unspoken example he took his place among the leaders of the community. It is unnecessary here to enumerate the varied and important services which he rendered. He brought with him the fruits of hard work at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, at Columbia University and during his years in the active ministry. Settled among us he gave unstinted effort to civic organizations like the Community Chest and the Council for Civic Unity. He served on the local boards of such groups as the American Civil Liberties Union. During the last war he was called on for help in the National Labor Relations Board, in the arbitration of labor troubles, in the organizing and development of the World Affairs Council and the like, and during all this period was in demand here and elsewhere as a speaker. We who have worked with him in so many

fields are happy to have some record of the fruits of his labor in this collection of sermons and addresses.

We have in them a vivid expression of the things for which he has stood, and more than that, a very good picture of the man himself. His friends will welcome it because it helps them to know him better. Those who have not known him, will know him and understand the influential position which he holds in this community, throughout the nation and abroad.

He has made this selection of sermons and addresses without special regard for chronology and with no attempt to group them in any topical fashion; and I do not know that any such grouping is necessary. But as I have read them I have realized it is not difficult to see them as revealing to us three important and differing aspects of the message which they bring to the world. The three are: his interpretation of the place of the Jew in the world of today; his outlook on the social problems of that world; and the meaning of religion in his own personal life.

I venture under this rough classification to call the attention of the readers of the book to some of the sermons or addresses which are most significant. It is of course clear that every address reveals personality, that in these days there must be constant contact with the question of Judaism, and that it is hard for any prophetic voice not to touch upon the social problems which beset us. Indeed the whole book is pregnant with the spirit of the great prophets of Israel.

At least five of the principal addresses deal with the place of the Jew in the world today. The first delivered only last year at the meeting of the American Council for Judaism strikes the note which is carried through all the others and appears again and again in briefer broadcasts: "Judaism is a religion." The Jews in America are American, he says, in the Commonwealth Club address on "Israel and the United States," and in an address on Zionism ("A Reform Rabbi's Reply") he emphasizes the illuminating principle that the answer to anti-Semitism lies in *life*. Again in another Commonwealth Club address on "The Jews and the World Today," he speaks of some of the grounds for anti-

Semitism and reiterates the fact that the contribution of the Jew to the world is religious. It is not and should not be anything else.

One turns to some of the addresses which deal with the Rabbi's outlook on the wide field of social welfare and finds the same penetrating insight into realities. Three of the addresses seem to me unforgettable. The first is the deeply touching Memorial Day address on "Memories and Hopes" with the appeal, familiar enough to all of us but not often expressed in words which sink so deep, to "Keep faith with the dead." The Old Testament word of the Lord rings in our ears: "Bring no more vain oblations."

More practically as the title indicates, he deals with some of the problems of society in the address on "Social Progress Fact, or Fiction" and in that on "Short-Cuts to Utopia" one catches the spirit of one who has lived constantly in the companionship of the great books which appeal to wisdom. Indeed in these shorter broadcasts, a series of which conclude the collection, there is a constant reference to the fundamental problem which faces us today: How are we to catch up in our souls, our moral standards, our spiritual aspirations with the appallingly rapid development of scientific understanding of the world. How can these deep spiritual values keep pace with the physical developments of science?

The third group, I suggested, deals with the Rabbi's personal religious faith and life. One touches it at every point; but I venture to note a few addresses which seem to me especially significant. The second sermon tells of preaching as a supreme part of a rabbi's work. It is necessary to the spiritual development of the Jewish community. It is the exposition of the ancient faith of Israel in relation to the modern world. The faith of Israel is a summons to the men of today. In a later sermon he reveals his own view of life as he emphasizes the need of *hatred*. Religion preaches love, mercy, conciliation; but it also preaches justice and the hatred of wrong. Our religious life fails unless we hate, with profound conviction, all injustice, all wrong doing. In a great address to the Commonwealth Club he tells the tragic story of the suffering of

the Jews in Germany, of their courage, their endurance, and again makes clear that their contribution to society is religious. Again in the following address to the American Council for Judaism he quotes Kohler's words (and his own faith) "*one Holy God, one undivided humanity.*"

But it is not necessary to multiply references. The sermons and addresses throughout reveal to us a man whose religion means all the world to him, whose great joy it is not only to teach it and preach it but to live it. We have been fortunate in San Francisco to have him as a friend and a citizen. We have been more fortunate that his greatest contribution to our common life has been to that which is deepest and most important for us all: the presence and the purpose of God. In all the tragedies and joys of life our strength and our refuge is in God. The Lord is King.

EDWARD L. PARSONS

Now go, write it down
Inscribe it in a book,
That it may serve as a lasting testimony
In the days to come.

ISAIAH 30:8

GETTING BACK TO FUNDAMENTALS¹

WE usually think of the prophets of Israel as progressive spirits in revolt against inherited ways of conduct and belief, spiritual pioneers who prodded their generation to pull themselves free from the dead hand of the past and blaze new trails toward the future. Certainly none in this unique procession of illustrious rebels was more intolerant of old customs and traditions than Jeremiah. It is, therefore, somewhat startling to come across this passage in one of his most memorable and eloquent utterances:

*"Stand ye in the ways and see
And ask for the old paths
Where is the good way, and walk therein
And ye shall find rest for your souls."*

The prophet spoke those words at a time of grave political unrest and social crisis, when the fear of Babylonian invasion had struck terror into the inhabitants of Judea. Listen to Jeremiah's description of the situation:

*"Evil looketh forth from the north
And a great destruction . . .
They lay hold on bow and spear
They are cruel, and show no mercy,
Their voice is like the roaring sea
And they ride upon horses . . ."*

That was the dim prospect that confronted his country. It was a critical state of affairs, one which called for wise counsel and statesmanship of the highest order—qualities in which the great prophets were by no means deficient. Under the circumstances, Jeremiah's advice seems all the more astonishing:

*"Stand ye in the ways and see
And ask for the old paths
Where is the good way, and walk therein
And ye shall find rest for your souls."*

Confronted with the greatest peril his people had ever faced, this forward-looking apostle of progress could only advise his people to hold fast to their

¹A sermon preached at the Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, D. C., April 4, 1952, for the Eighth Annual Conference of the American Council for Judaism.

traditions, the fundamental values in their long experience, the old familiar paths trod for ages by their forefathers. One suspects that the enemies of the prophet flew into tantrums and denounced him as a reactionary, but history has exposed the stupidity of their judgment as emphatically as it has underscored the soundness of Jeremiah's. He knew that the genius of Judaism lay in the realm of the spirit, that its invincibility was safeguarded by forces beyond the might of kings and the stratagems of conquerors. His insight carried beyond the passing parade of power and pageantry to the endless procession of great truths down the centuries. That was to be the road of Jewish destiny, a course charted by principles as fixed and enduring as the very stars in their courses. These were the eternal standards of reference in every age, the durable goods on the counter of life's values, that hold the promise of fulfillment to the perplexed and world-weary souls of men.

If someone now suggests that the appeal to tradition which Jeremiah invoked is a very perilous recourse of which one ought to be wary, I agree. Certainly we of the Reform movement have waged some of our most hard-fought battles against it. Indeed the early Reform rabbis were generally referred to as "Protest-rabbiner;" their most striking characteristic, so it seemed, was a militant and clamorous protest against the tyranny of inherited ways of religious expression.

In 1850 Isaac M. Wise was the rabbi of congregation Beth-Elohim, the leading synagogue in Albany, New York. He had been preaching against the retention of old customs and practices, urging the abolition of venerable forms and rituals, and as he stood before the ark on Rosh Ha-shonah to take out the scroll of the Law, the president of the congregation barred his way, and struck him a savage blow full in the face. "This was the signal," wrote Dr. Wise in his memoirs, "for an uproar the like of which I never experienced. The people acted like furies. It was as though the synagogue had burst forth in a flaming conflagration. Within two minutes the whole assembly was a struggling mass. The constable came and arrested me as the ring-leader of a rebellious mob at a public service." Well, Dr. Wise's experience in Albany was only different in degree from similar struggles waged by Reform Judaism all over this country against the entrenched forces of sanctified obsolescence. The appeal to tradition is a powerful instrument with a long and suspicious record; again and again men have said about certain things that they were the inheritance of

the Fathers and must be preserved. They said it about child-sacrifice and human slavery, about witchcraft and feudalism, about the divine right of kings and entangling foreign alliances, about the sixty-hour week in industry and the God-given right of children to work in factories and mines. Yes, one has a right to be very suspicious of the appeal to tradition!

But having said that as emphatically as we know how, let us walk around that proposition and tackle it from the other side, too, because something more needs to be said. One knows that however dangerous and harmful are the wrong uses of that argument, its right uses are magnificent and capable of incalculable good. An old way *can* be a good way. Indeed one of the functions and criteria of high religion is to evaluate the legacy of the past in the light of what Lowell called "new occasions and new duties," to discriminate between the intellectual and social rubbish that has piled up in the backyard of history, and the priceless heirlooms that are not only undeteriorated by the withering processes of time, but made increasingly glorious and invaluable as they come down from generation to generation. When Moses stood in Pharaoh's court and said "Let my people go that they may serve Me," he may not have realized that he was starting a great tradition, but that is precisely what happened back there in Egypt. He was taking the first steps on a path that was to lead on through unborn centuries; a path on which walked Martin Luther when he faced another king and said, "Here I stand, I can do no other, God help me;" the path that Patrick Henry strode when he thundered "Give me liberty or give me death," the path that Lincoln trod through gaunt and anxious years, the path that even now, as we sit here tonight in Washington, leads out from yonder Capitol dome to the ends of the earth as a broad and shining highway, beckoning the children of men whose spirits are driven by rods of despotism behind curtains of iron. An old way *can* be a good way!

So in one field after another, from home and family life where the principle of marital fidelity has a long and honorable record to the arts of healing and jurisprudence whose disciplines rest solidly on foundations laid in antiquity, there are traditions which bind the generations together with ties that reinforce and ennoble all human striving. They are the fundamental ideas by which the human spirit is nourished. Religion is the supreme custodian and conservator of these ideal values. Great traditions make for great religion. Every great religion has historical perspective. It looks at life in its totality,

as an aviator at 40,000 feet surveys the landscape, where no molehill can possibly masquerade as Mount Everest. That is why great religion is not overly perturbed by the changing moods and whims of fickle society. Its abiding concern is not with modernities, but with eternities. It knows that there are fashions in philosophy as in furniture, in science as in dress, in theology as in decoration; how often it has led these transient tenants of man's fancy from the nursery to the graveyard, and written their obituaries! The wise and discerning of the race have understood this truth. They have clearly distinguished between the road of statesmanship and the path of politics, the road of principle and the trail of expediency, the road of conviction and the way of convenience. For forty years Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness; he knew there is no short-cut to the Promised Land. You can write this down and underscore it: *every detour that mankind has taken from the old and tried path, the good way that Jeremiah urged, has ended ultimately in loneliness, frustration and defeat.*

Jeremiah preached to a generation that was caught in one of history's decisive hours. The ancient Semitic world was in the throes of a vast upheaval that was destined to have profound and revolutionary effects upon every state and society. It is obviously an understatement to say that we face a similar crisis today. Thanks to inventive science and the miracles of modern technological development, our modern world is a much more compactly inter-related and geographically consolidated entity than was ever dreamed of by our forebears, so that the slightest disturbance in the remotest corner of the globe is immediately registered on the sensitive political, economic, industrial, and social seismographs of every community on earth. Think of the cataclysmic changes that our generation has witnessed! How frequently in our own lifetime have we not seen the map of the world torn apart and pasted together again with human blood; the economic and political structures of the nations demolished, and new Babels built by men of destiny with doubtful credentials as social architects! Contemplate the unrecognizable transformations that have in our day refashioned the lives of 200 million Russians, 465 million Chinese, 60 million Germans, 46 million Italians, and hundreds of millions more in Europe, India, Burma, Japan, Korea, Palestine, and indeed almost every land on earth. Consider the life-and-death struggle in which East and West are grimly locked in what is called a cold war, only by the grace of

a nervous political euphemism hastily improvised against the fearful prospect of atomic destruction. Think of the disheartening setbacks in western lands that democracy has suffered at the hands of totalitarian tyranny and arrogant nationalism; of the staggering tax burdens under which men struggle in keen-edged rivalry for deadlier armaments; the conscription of the world's finest manhood and its vast industrial and scientific potential for the grim business of mass murder! International double-dealing has never been so brash and ubiquitous. Political immorality and scandalous betrayals of public trust shriek from every headline; cynicism is rampant, and Authority mops her bewildered brow at the mounting list of broken disciplines, shattered covenants, and discarded social controls. It is a bewildered age uncertain of its bearings, unsure of its direction, confused by the din of its aimless traffic, unable to find some simple, clear-cut standards to which men may pledge their lives, their loyalties, and their sacred honor.

There is so obvious a parallel between the crisis of our age and that which Jeremiah faced, that in surveying the essential points of resemblance one clearly sees that history does indeed repeat itself. One of the reasons why our Hebrew Bible has become the Sacred Scriptures of western civilization is that it contains a quality of wisdom that walks down the centuries and comes right up to our own doorstep with a message as contemporary as the daily weather report. What if today, when we so desperately need sure guidance and direction, we were to "stand in the ways and see"—to take a good long look at the old time-tested paths that in the millennial history of the race have always been the good way, the way that brings rest to the tired souls of men? Looking out over our world today, after two world wars and a third so imminent that we can feel the heat of its lethal breath in Korea, are we not yet convinced that the paths we confidently relied upon for salvation have failed us utterly? The 19th century staked its faith for Utopia in education; the 20th in scientific achievement. Both have proved fatuous. Their high hopes are mocked by the desperate plight of the world today, with our educated and scientifically improved means of fostering hatred, enforcing tyranny, and mass destruction! Was it not only yesterday we were told that religion had to be adjusted to the ways of modern science and modern education; that its message was outmoded and eclipsed by the new learning and the march of inventive science? Well, look out over this world today and tell me: who now needs to

do the adjusting, religion to this modern chaos, or this modern chaos in which we are engulfed to the everlasting truths of religion?

Like every great truth whose universality is all-inclusive, what we have been talking about applies with sure and deadly accuracy to every aspect of our personal and public affairs. The limitations of my time and competence do not permit even a swift walk around the long circumference of the area it encloses, for it embraces the totality of life. Let us tonight, therefore, limit our frame of reference, and pinpoint our inquiry on one segment of our theme: Judaism and Jewish life. As in all past history, so today one can see reflected there in microcosm the tumult and confusion of the times. What are the old paths, where is the way that for countless generations of our fathers proved to be "the good way," that brings rest to the harassed and bewildered? Let us "stand in the ways and see."

Our observation begins with the fundamental fact that Judaism is a religion. It always has been. It has never been anything else. From the time of its legendary origin in God's revelation to Abram, its followers have disagreed often and vehemently about many things, but about one thing they never disagreed: that Judaism is a religion. From time to time there were leaders—priests, prophets, kings, or just plain laymen—who repudiated this or that custom or observance, criticized this or the other superstition or doctrine, challenged this or the other practice or theory. One thing and one thing only they never repudiated or criticized or challenged—the fundamental fact that Judaism is a religion.

Being a Jew means being part of a group identified with a religion, the Jewish religion. When Jonah, in the biblical tale, was discovered asleep in the hold of the foundering ship, the sailors dragged him on deck and overwhelmed him with questions: "What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?" One short and simple answer was sufficient identification: "I am a Hebrew; I fear the Lord, the God of heaven." That told the whole story. A Hebrew was a God-fearing man, a member of a religious community.

Nor is membership in this community restricted solely to persons born in it. That is true of a race; it is not true of a religion. One need not be born a Jew to be a Jew. A person cannot join the Negro race, or the Caucasian race

or the Mongoloid race. He has to be born into it, and thereafter, as long as he lives, he is perforce a member of that race. He cannot change it. Always and forever he will be a Negro or a Caucasian or a Mongolian, and there is nothing he can do about it. That never was or is the case in Judaism. Since time immemorial people have joined and left the Jewish faith. Judaism has produced no greater figure than Moses: his wife was a proselyte. King David was descended from a gentile woman who had adopted Judaism, and in the New Testament Matthew is absolutely correct—although he needed not to have been so testy about it—when he quoted Jesus as saying of the Pharisees “ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte.” The number of gentiles who adopted Judaism is beyond computation; it includes aristocrats and commoners, illustrious rabbis and latterly even German Christians who espoused Judaism by way of protesting in the most emphatic way they knew against the barbarities of Hitlerism. And mark this well: according to Jewish law, as Professor Lauterbach quite properly has emphasized, *a proselyte is a Jew in every respect*.

Conversely, Jews need not remain Jews. Judaism has its exits as well as its entrances, and the former have always had a busy traffic. Sometimes, but only for brief periods, those exits have been guarded by the sentinels of a spurious “racial purity,” but egress was ultimately possible. Had Judaism not lost so many of her sons and daughters through conversion, we would today be the largest religious denomination in the world. As it is, you can find followers of Judaism in every race and practically every nationality on earth. But whether we be few or many is beside the point; the simple fact remains that Judaism is a great historic religion, *and a religion only*.

Racism can never be a substitute for Judaism. Racism is a boorish imposter. At best it is bigotry wearing a mortarboard; at worst it is the resurrected ghost of Hitler. Nationalism is no substitute for Judaism. It has attempted to counterfeit the currency of Judaism, and so many Jewish eyes, tear-dimmed by tragedy, have not detected the fraud, that this bogus specie has gained wide circulation. Philanthropy and social service are the satellites of Judaism, but however necessary and lovely, they are only lesser luminaries, reflecting the refulgence of the orb whence they sprang. “Jewish culture” is no substitute for Judaism. Emptied of religious content, Jewish culture is either a phrase or a fetish, no more than that, dependent on kitchen recipes, musicians, painters and story-tellers; but not on God. No, my friends, I fear that all these

alternate routes for the main highway are inadequate: "For the bed is too short for a man to stretch himself; and the covering too narrow when he gathereth himself up."

This is our first observation when we "stand in the ways and see."

Let us go a little further now, and consider some of the features of Judaism which give it special character and distinguishing quality. For not only was our Faith unique among the religions of antiquity, but it by no means exhausted its vitality in the two great daughter religions that sprang from its loins. On the contrary, the intellectual, moral and spiritual pillars upon which it rests grow stronger with the increase of man's wisdom and experience. We have often been told that Judaism has constantly changed with the times, as far as many of its customs and ceremonies and rituals are concerned. Of course this is true. What we are too seldom told is wherein Judaism has *not* changed—what constitutes its essence and abiding character. Suppose we briefly have a look at that.

From its earliest beginnings Judaism was a faith built around a God-idea. In the ancient Semitic world, communities were not so much nations as we understand that political concept today, as peoples who identified themselves with a particular deity. Today we call such societies churches or synagogues. When David is forced to flee from the wrath of Saul to the land of the Philistines, his chief lament is that he was separated from the protection and worship of Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews. The Hebrews were a religious community united in their devotion to a God unlike the deities of wood and stone and metal which their neighbors worshipped. The second commandment concerning graven images makes the distinction clear.

Moreover, the God of Israel is neither nature nor man. Both are His handiwork. Consequently neither science nor humanism holds any threat over Judaism. God is always infinitely more than both nature and man, since no stream can rise higher than its source. Here is the irreconcilable difference between Judaism, and both pantheism and Christianity. The more we learn about the mysteries of matter and man, the more evident it appears that there is no absolute independent existence for anything or any person in the universe. The wider implications of Einstein's theory, as pointed out by the scientist Haldane, illuminate the truth that all reality is relative to something

else, all save God alone, Who is the Ultimate Reality. We are all dependent upon Him: He is not dependent upon us. It is a good thing for a man to remind himself every so often of this inescapable truth. Failing to do so, he may still enjoy his golf and get a bang out of Canasta and be the life of the cocktail party, but he has not grown up. The world is in a bad way because there is so much intellectual and emotional immaturity all around us. Harry Allen Overstreet elaborates this excellently in his study "The Mature Mind."

Judaism never pretended to describe God exhaustively. It constantly renews the invitation to man to discover more and more about Him. But it does declare that He is the supreme moral and spiritual Power in the universe. The approach of Passover reminds us that one of His chief purposes is the redemption of man and society. "I am the Lord thy God Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt." He is the Power that takes men and nations out of bondage, whether it be personal slavery to a vicious habit or degrading sin, or organized slavery imposed upon a people by any form of tyranny. According to Judaism, one of the chief functions of God in history is to break the chains that enslave the human spirit, and that is exactly what He has been doing from Moses to Lincoln. Judaism lives by the faith that ultimately He will extend His redemption, with the help of man, His co-worker, to the ends of the earth.

Moreover, the God of Judaism is not an intellectual abstraction at the end of a syllogism. He is a vital, dynamic Reality Who must mean to us four things: (1) He gives us laws which we must obey; (2) He is the goodness which we must achieve; (3) He is the wisdom which we must revere and trust; (4) He is the Person whom in mystic union we love. I have not carelessly formulated these attributes. They correspond to the four classic channels in which the Jewish spirit expressed itself in Holy Writ: the legislator through whom the divine laws were revealed; the prophet with his passion for social righteousness; the sage whose wisdom leads to serenity, and the mystic who achieves child-like self-identification with his heavenly Father.

Now I have probably taxed your patience with this somewhat academic analysis of the God conception in Judaism, and perhaps I ought to beg your indulgence. My reason for doing so, as you may have suspected, is because it is high time that we Jews began again to talk about God. This generation has talked about many things in Jewish life; it has been passionately articulate to

the point of fanaticism, but the message it has shouted from the world's rooftops has not been the message of Judaism. If our history teaches anything, it is that in the conflict as to the importance of the group and the importance of the God-idea, it is the God-idea that is the dominating factor. Too long have we kept our God confined in the Torah, concealed behind costly gates and draperies in our lavish arks, or buried in the prayerbook where He is usually discovered once or twice a year in the Kaddish,¹ and then unrecognized and misapprehended. It is not enough for us to have given this God to western civilization; we must claim Him for ourselves again, bring Him back once more into our hearts and homes and lives, and the lives of our children, and learn again in justice and love and mercy to walk humbly before Him.

A third and final observation to which we come now in our survey of the historic road that Judaism has travelled has to do with man, considered simply as an individual. Our faith has some very significant things to say on this subject. Of all the great world-religions, it said them first and said them best. They urgently need reiteration today, both for ourselves and all mankind.

In Judaism the individual is important, every individual, regardless of his origin, color, creed, or circumstances. Each was made in the image of God, and bears on his soul the seal of divinity. It is worthy of note that our Torah begins with the birth of one man and ends with the death of another; both were important as individuals. Significantly enough, Adam was not a Jew; that ought to be something for Jewish chauvinists to think about! Adam, said the Rabbis, was made from dust taken from the desert—a no-man's land—that no race or nation might in time to come boast of its longer lineage or superior ancestry. Similarly, the Torah, they said, was given not in Palestine, but in the wilderness—again a no-man's land, so that everyone who desires it can accept it. This was no subtle propaganda for conversion; Judaism never denied salvation to those outside the synagogue. On the contrary it declared "The righteous of all faiths have a share in the world to come." Thus did the genius of our Faith rebuke intolerance, and support the right of every individual to hold fast to his personal convictions. "When one sees a great course of people," taught the Rabbis, "one should thank God for not having made them all of one mind." And again they declared "An earthly king mints

¹ The mourner's prayer for the dead.

many coins, each identical with the other; how much greater is the King of Kings, Who has created so many myriads of individuals, and no two of them alike." Was there ever a more devastating rebuke to uniformity! Can you now understand why the founding fathers of the American republic, in establishing a new nation based upon the sanctity of human personality and the dignity of every individual, went back to our old Hebrew Bible for authority and inspiration? And is it not one of the saddest travesties of our time that Judaism, which has always aimed at the building of free moral personalities, has been artfully exploited in the interests of mass conformity and regimentation?

This is a serious indictment, but it is unfortunately true. Temples and synagogues all over America are being used as outposts of Israeli nationalism, to enlist Jews everywhere in the service of the new state. Pulpits and classrooms fly the flag of Israel; its national anthem is sung with fervor, and its official holidays observed with enthusiasm. Religious textbooks are infiltrated with political indoctrination, and politics are camouflaged in prayers to inculcate an alien national sentiment. Parochial schools multiply throughout the land, not to strengthen religious loyalty, but to develop a strong sense of national and racial solidarity, thereby isolating our youth from the democratic processes of the public school, the greatest training-ground for normal adjustment into American life.

If someone out there is saying that this is the kind of revival of Judaism that American Jews really want, I venture to dispute that claim. In the first place, these things are not indicative of a return to Judaism, but a throw-back to the narrowest kind of racial exclusiveness and ghetto tribalism. And in the second place, they are a far cry from the dreams and hopes of our fathers who fled European despotism for this land of promise, and fell upon their knees to kiss its blessed soil when penniless, but rich in faith in its destiny, they landed on these shores. I say that for five million American Jews this country is not alone their promised land, but their land of fulfillment. Never has any country given so much freedom and opportunity to Jews as has America; never has America received more love and loyalty than from her Jews.

Eric Hoffer, in a recent brilliant sociological study of contemporary mass movements, including Zionism, says this:

"A full-blown mass movement is a ruthless affair, and its management is in the hands of ruthless fanatics, who use words only to give an appearance of

spontaneity to a consent obtained by coercion." Precisely so! Will anyone knowing the facts, deny that there is not more of coercion than spontaneity in the response of American Jews to the appeals of Jewish political nationalism? The Jewish Nationalists have a lot of money. They hire slick advertising experts. They control the Jewish press. They know how to influence politicians. They are not too troubled by moral scruples. They are skilled in the techniques of smear. They have made people afraid to think, afraid to speak, afraid to disagree. They have turned rabbis into puppets and made moral cowards of community leaders. They justify any means that serves their ends, and smash all opposition with a club they call "unity." At a time of flagrant corruption in public life and the deterioration of moral standards, a time of increased juvenile delinquency and disintegrating family life, a time when civil liberties are imperiled and the enemies of democracy grow bolder and more arrogant—in short, at a time of spiritual and moral crisis when the prophetic voice of Judaism was never more desperately needed, what message does our liberal synagogue choose to emphasize? *The place of supremacy formerly occupied in the Central Conference of American Rabbis by the Commission on Social Justice, we are told, has now been taken over by the Committee on Customs and Ceremonies.*¹ So! Put a *tallith* and a *yarmelke*² on the rabbi as they do in Tel-Aviv, teach the children to speak Hebrew and plant trees on Israeli Arbor Day, and presto! American Reform Judaism is up to date! Shades of Isaac Mayer Wise and Kaufmann Kohler!

I realize that in pressing home this point I am almost sure to lay myself open to grave misunderstanding. That has happened before and doubtless will again. Someone is bound to think that I am minimizing the critical urgency of the needs which American Jewry was mobilized to deal with. Only a heartless fool would under-rate them. Or someone will accuse me of hostility to the state of Israel. None but a knave or its political foes would wish it harm. Let us keep the record straight and not confuse the issue. Our quarrel is not with the new-born state and its heroic builders who have found asylum there from Europe's charnel houses. Our quarrel is with the philosophy and program of Jewish political nationalism as a formula for American Jews, and a

¹ Solomon B. Freehof, *Each Generation and its Truth* (Address to Graduating Class, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion) 1950, p. 9.

² Prayer shawl and skull-cap.

substitute for the historic Faith of Israel. We accuse it of corrupting the integrity of American Jewish life through its sinister tactics of regimentation, coercion, political blackmail and opportunism. We reject it and all its instruments as a retreat from the highway of Jewish destiny and achievement in America to the dead-end street of medieval ghettoism, totally alien and hostile to the spirit and institutions of the United States. As a means for arousing mass enthusiasm, fervor and exaltation it is undeniably a sure way and an easy way, but it is not "the good way"—not by a long sea-mile!

Let no one underestimate the problems confronting Jewish life in America. They are numerous and complex; and one has a right to be skeptical of any single formula which claims to have all the answers. Nevertheless, I venture to say that perhaps on the whole, the direction in which the American Council for Judaism is travelling may be more readily acceptable to the American spirit than that offered by any group in Jewish life today, provided it be judged without prejudice, and provided further that it be not rejected for reasons other than the truths to which it is committed. Alas! the provisos are the flies in the balm of Gilead! In its present subservience to Jewish nationalism one suspects that American Jewry would reject with contempt and derision the proposition that the world is round, if it were advanced by the American Council for Judaism. But there are hopeful signs that this coldly calculated, carefully organized and generously subsidized hostility is abating. When the fog lifts, the old paths, the good way, will be clearly seen again.

Meanwhile let us patiently and humbly strive by precept and example to fortify the religious life of American Jewry, be it Orthodox, Conservative or Reform. Let us reconcile ourselves to the fact that we shall never achieve unity in Jewry; it never has existed, nor is it even desirable. What we can hope for and work toward is maximum cooperation among all groups on the basis of our common religious and American needs and loyalties. And let us never be tempted, in bitterness or impatience, to drift away from the larger stream of Jewish fellowship. Our history reveals a Nemesis for splinter groups in Jewish life; isolation has always ended in sterility and oblivion. In hours of discouragement let us remember those immortal words of Isaiah: "'Ye are my witnesses,' saith the Lord." Well, the duty of a witness is to bear testimony. Sometimes it becomes necessary for the court to admonish the witness to talk louder so he can be heard. So I fancy that in these days when the world's

spiritual life is so feeble, God is saying to us, "Won't you please speak up a little louder."

Once there was a violinist of great genius and versatility, whose artistry created a sensation. But jealous rivals circulated the rumor that he was not really great in himself, that it was an extraordinary Stradivarius he played upon that was responsible for those moving tones that captivated his audiences. So one night in Albert Hall in London, the violinist played his whole program through without leaving the stage, and received an ovation that made the rafters ring. When the thunder of applause subsided, he took the violin he had used all evening, smashed it across his knee, and threw the pieces on the floor. "Now," he said, "I will play one number on my Strad."

My friends, we Jews have shown the world that we could play upon the instrument of nationalism, and we have given a phenomenal performance. We have proved our versatility. Now let us of American Jewry turn again to our beloved Strad, the Faith of our fathers made vibrant and mellow by our law-givers and prophets, our seers and saints, that our genius may be fully revealed in those harmonies of justice, righteousness, and universal fellowship in God, that bring rest to the tired souls of men.

THE SPOKEN WORD AS PART OF THE WORSHIP¹

THE custom of expounding the Word of God in our public worship has a venerable and distinguished tradition in Israel. There is a passage in the Talmud which alludes to Noah as the first preacher. Although it seems fairly well established that the rites of the sacrificial cult during the days of the Temple were carried on without benefit of homeletics and although in the curriculum of religious practice of the early Hebrews there was no formal preaching, some of the most powerful sermons in the literature of religious oratory were spoken during that period by Israel's great prophets, whose ministry was not only carried on completely independent of temple or priesthood but who invariably challenged the traditional interpretations of religious belief and custom as practiced by the professional custodians of the early Hebrew faith.

According to Leopold Zunz, whose "Gottesdienstlichen Vortrage der Juden" still remains the classic history of the spoken word in Judaism, it was in the fourth century before the Common Era that Ezra, who introduced many reforms into Jewish life and observance, inaugurated the custom of expounding the Scriptures on Sabbaths and holy days and other occasions when the community met for public worship. It would be tempting, did time permit and were my scholarship equal to the task, to trace the development of the Jewish sermon through the centuries and the lands where Israel has dwelt since that distant day. The Talmud is studded with sermonic gems with which our ancient sages illumined the message of Judaism; our Midrashic literature is almost entirely an anthology of excerpts culled from the sermons of great rabbis. Moreover, not only is Jewish preaching as old as the synagogue itself but the sermon since time immemorial has constituted the central feature of the religious service. To be sure, there was a considerable period during the Middle Ages among the Askenazic Jews of France and Germany when they were so overwhelmed by persecution and so engrossed in the intricacies of legal dialecticism and their prayer-books were so cluttered up with piyyutim² that preaching became less and less frequent until the 17th and 18th centuries when it reappeared to remain a permanent feature of religious worship. The important thing for us to remember is that the preacher in Israel is not a par-

¹ Delivered at the Thirty-Fifth National Biennial Convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, New Orleans, Louisiana, January 15, 1937.

² Religious poetry.

venu on the Jewish scene; the Jew went to the synagogue not only to participate in community worship, but also and often primarily to be edified by the eloquence of the preacher who interpreted the Word of God as taught in Holy Writ and indicated its relevancy to the problems of daily life.

Today the sermon, more than ever, is invariably the most popular feature of the synagogue service. By this I do not mean that the spoken word in the modern temple always represents Judaism at its best. Adolph Jellinek, the most brilliant Jewish preacher of the 19th century, once remarked: "Judaism is a beautiful religion. What a pity it is that the Jews spoil it." So many a pulpit address (and let a rabbi be the first to confess it) instead of enriching the inspirational content of public worship, constitutes a dreadful interlude of actual suffering to discriminating stylists who writhe when the English language is tortured, or to plain average people who flounder at the first barrage of sophisticated polysyllables, or to informed laymen who agonize at the preacher's superficiality and dogmatism in discussing complicated subjects on which his ignorance is fluent. But despite these shortcomings, it is nevertheless true that preaching is the most important work of the modern rabbi. This was not so in bygone ages, when Jewish life was rigidly regulated by Talmudic law and rabbinical jurisprudence. Then the rabbi was primarily an ecclesiastical jurist, a scholarly authority on Jewish law whose decisions were constantly sought and respected. Today all that is changed. The juridical functions of the rabbi have been superseded by his work in the pulpit, which constitutes his unique and distinctive service to Israel. True enough, he may exhibit amazing versatility in other directions. He may be a proficient pedagogue, social worker, author, lecturer, executive, community leader, or fill any one or all of a dozen posts, as indeed he frequently attempts to do. But let it be emphasized that these activities must never be his primary concern. Every one of them can be effectively discharged by laymen. John Spargo once said that all the preaching done in America in a year would not contribute as much to the welfare of our country as the work of one obscure country school teacher in a little red schoolhouse. Well, that observation is open to argument, but there is no argument about the fact that a tremendous amount of the preaching in America today is appallingly mediocre, and even worse. A number of reasons are responsible for this situation; we cannot go into them here. This much, however, I venture to assert with confidence. If the Jewish com-

munity would realize that the rabbi, unlike Joshua who commanded the sun to stand still, has only twenty-four hours a day at his disposal and cannot be in several places simultaneously; if it would free him or insist that he free himself from many of the time and energy-consuming activities which intrude upon hours that he should spend in his study and which constitute, in greater or less degree, a digression from his chief vocation, the results in terms of improved preaching would be so startling that many congregations would scarcely recognize the new voice in the pulpit; and many a rabbi now regarded as a cure for insomnia would be transfigured into a dynamic, challenging preacher of irresistible persuasiveness!

Moreover, not only is the sermon the most important work of the rabbi, because it is his distinctive field which cannot successfully be delegated to the layman, but because it is largely through the spoken word that he can best fulfill the function of his calling. And that function, I believe, is to develop and strengthen the spiritual life of the Jewish community. His is the task of giving men a courageous faith in God, an unconquerable conviction that life has spiritual origins, spiritual backing, spiritual destiny. He is the voice of the Jewish experience in all the ages, the expounder of its wisdom, ancient and modern, the interpreter of its genius as revealed in law-giver, prophet, poet, philosopher and mystic, the spokesman for its ideals and their significance to the contemporary scene. This is the rabbi's calling, none other: a calling which he abdicates at his peril to make a shidduch¹ with extraneous secularisms, or a morganatic marriage with literature, sociology, economics or politics.

At this point the question arises "What constitutes a Jewish sermon?" The answer cannot be given in terms of a formula or stereotype. The sermon is the creation of the individual rabbi, fashioned out of the totality of his resources, intellectual, emotional, imaginative, literary, pragmatic and oratorical. More than that, it is the preacher's personality become articulate. That is what Emerson had in mind when he wrote: "What you are . . . thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary." But considered simply from the standpoint of style, the sermon reflects the capacity of the man in the pulpit. Maimonides observed that there are three indispensable prerequisites to prophecy: a superior imagination, moral excellence and mental perfection,

¹ Matchmaking for matrimony.

and he went on to point out that since these qualities are found in varying degrees among men, there are gradations of prophetic ability. Similarly the Midrash, elaborating this idea, declares that the holy spirit that descended upon individual prophets was not the same degree in each case; some prophets received sufficient for one book, others enough for two books, and others only so much as two verses. To be sure, there are these gradations in preaching ability, as in every calling; but whereas an engineer or an architect may, to advantage, deliberately copy the technique of a master, it is homiletically suicidal for the preacher to do so. The engineer and architect must obey the laws of nature; the preacher's art is governed by no rules save those of his own invention. So Jellinek, for example, was exceedingly brilliant in his use of the Midrash,¹ and skillfully wove it into his sermons. Promptly there sprang up a host of imitators. Whereupon Jellinek, with mingled amusement and impatience, exclaimed: "Because I use the Agada² on a larger scale, all the text-jugglers who puff and blow under an excessive load of the Agada in their sermons believe that they are disciples of my school. These persons are like poor cooks who use pepper not as a spice, but as a food." There is that danger, you see, in trying to preach Jewish sermons by formula.

Nevertheless, I believe we can, within broad limits, describe if not define the true character of a Jewish sermon. Briefly stated, it is an exposition of the message of Israel. If someone protests that this characterization is too flexible to be accurate, too general to be descriptive, and too ambiguous to be sectarian, my answer is that the broad gamut of the Jewish experience and the universalism of our faith give the Jewish preacher such latitude in his subject matter and such diversity of resources that, at the risk of repeating a much-abused aphorism, it may be said that nothing human is alien to his interest.

This does not mean, however, that the Jewish pulpit must forfeit its Jewish individuality. There is a vast difference between being broadminded and unprincipled. Some synagogue utterances are so denuded of Jewish character that they are utterly impossible of denominational classification. It is possible for the rabbi to be so liberal that he forgets to be Jewish. Nor can a Biblical text alone establish the Jewish legitimacy of a sermon; no one knows better

¹ Classical Hebrew commentaries on the Bible.

² Rabbinic literature dealing mainly with interpreting the Bible and the ethics of Judaism.

than we rabbis how easily a text can become a pretext. Neither can an adroit sprinkling of Hebrew words transform a secular address into a Jewish sermon; you know it is quite possible to deliver an anti-religious atheistic speech in the purest of Hebrew. No, a sermon to be Jewish must be permeated with the distinctive attributes of the Faith of Israel, it must reflect its philosophy, reveal at least one phase of its many-sidedness, and so fortify the religious faith of the Jewish community.

Perhaps it is easier to describe what a Jewish sermon should not be, than to prescribe its ingredients or to specify its content. Judaism is not ethical culture nor humanism nor theosophy; neither is it communism nor socialism nor capitalism. It is not philosophy nor sociology nor dramatic criticism, nor is it a gospel of secular nationalism or economic determinism. It is a religious faith made manifest in a certain quality of thinking and living. The Jewish sermon should articulate that faith or discuss the problems which confront us as a religious community at home and abroad. It may fortify its appeal to the modern mind by recourse to all forms of secular knowledge for illustration and argument, but it should never presume to usurp the authority of the specialist in those fields. The story is told of an archbishop who preached a powerful sermon on marriage and the joys of wedded life. Two old Irish women were heard discussing the address as they left the church. "That was a fine sermon His Reverence preached today," said one. "It was indeed," replied the other, "and I wish I knew as little about the matter as he does." So many a preacher, tempted irresistibly by the prevailing interest in a current fad or eager to attract a large audience by the lure of a non-religious theme, has rushed into territory verboten even to angels, and become ridiculously hoist by his own petard. While such preaching may add to the prestige of the rabbi as a versatile lecturer, a brilliant genius, a grand speaker, and evoke every extravagant superlative in the vocabulary of encomium familiar to the Jewish laity, not only does it not increase the effectiveness of a rabbi as a religious leader, it is a distinct disservice to the cause of religion. In the *Sefer Chasidim*, a celebrated Hebrew classic of the 13th century, the author declared that a God-fearing person who is unacquainted with the holy tongue does well to offer up his prayer in the language he understands. Well, it is not indispensable to the welfare of Israel that a rabbi should preach on psychoanalysis and Culbertson and Pareto and the love life of Hollywood. It is important, how-

ever, that he should be familiar with Torah in its broadest sense; with the Jewish saga as disclosed in our history and literature. That, to paraphrase Judah Ha Chasid, is the language he should understand and proclaim from the Jewish pulpit in accents of confident mastery.

This does not mean that every Jewish sermon must necessarily have a scriptural or rabbinic text, or that discussions of books or plays or contemporary problems have no legitimate place in the pulpit. As a matter of fact, our old Agada contains not a few stories and ideas which were appropriated from pagan sources, and surely by this time every informed Reform Jew ought to know that even the early Genesis legends in our Holy Writ were borrowed from Babylonian and other heathen cultures. But mark this significant fact: our rabbis and sages did not exploit these materials simply for their literary or dramatic or popular appeal. They used them as points of departure for excursions into the inspiring realms of Jewish faith and teaching; they transfigured them with spiritual and ethical values which turned their dross into golden wisdom; they rewrote those pagan texts in the vocabulary of ethical monotheism with such beauty and persuasiveness that they became the Holy Writ for half the world! That was the way the Hebrew prophets and illustrious rabbis of a bygone age wrote their book reviews. By the same token, no one should quarrel with a discussion from the pulpit of an important book or play, for after all, our people, quite properly, read and are influenced by these things; provided first, that a legitimate Jewish purpose informs the presentation, and, second, that these themes do not continually replace conventional pulpit subjects.

Indeed, the more one considers this entire question of Jewish preaching, the greater the conviction grows that what we are really dealing with here is a matter of esthetics, rather than homiletics. It all resolves itself into a question of good taste, of a sense of the fitness of things. Moreover, if the modern Jewish pulpit exhibits shocking evidences of crudity and decadence, the laity is by no means blameless. The suspicion may be justified that sometimes the rabbi deliberately truncates his higher possibilities in order to make religion more palatable, more effortless, easier to take. You have all heard it said that ministers cater too much to the rich. I will not stop to debate that here, but I will say that I am not afraid of that indictment. What does give me concern, however, is a much more serious charge, that we cater far too much to super-

ficial people. Too frequently our pulpits sacrifice the depth and power of an ancient wisdom to capture the fancy of fad-chasers and sermon-shoppers. Some years ago a prominent rabbi in one of our large communities was considering a subject for his weekly sermon. He asked a young colleague who happened to drop into his study to suggest a theme. "How about 'A Plea for Enlightened Religion?'" "Great Heavens, no! That won't do at all," was the emphatic reply. "Rabbi X"—and he mentioned a local colleague in a famous synagogue—"is preaching on Aimee Semple MacPherson next Sunday. I'll have to think of something just as exciting." There you have it! To be sure, sermon subjects are often grossly misleading. Many a preacher has used a most unorthodox title for a dignified and inspiring sermon, but the plain truth of the matter is that too often our pulpits make shoddy concessions to the vagaries of the mob, and substitute trivial and pedestrian pleasantries for our profound and timeless truths. And since rabbis are but human, and human nature being what it is, you may depend upon it that this condition will continue until the laity learns to sublimate its hunger for headlines from the pulpit to a hunger for God.

And finally (because I must hurry to a close), there is one aspect of this business of preaching which I would like particularly to underscore. To preach religion is not to deal in harmless platitudes and ring literary changes on the texts of Hebrew prophecy. To be sure, Judaism should and does give faith to the loyal, courage to the faltering, hope to the beaten, strength to the weary, comfort to the sorrowing, and renewal of spirit to all who seek its message. But there is another side to religion and the task of the preacher. Once I preached a sermon on the text "The Lord is my Shepherd," in which I spoke of God's wonderful providence and goodness, and tried to show how His loving care embraces all creation. After it was over, one of my members praised it highly as the best sermon I had ever preached (someone is always telling that to the rabbi about every sermon). He thanked me for preaching such a beautiful and comforting faith, and urged me always to preach that kind of sermon. A few days afterward I learned that my enthusiastic friend had been indicted for fraud. He had robbed hundreds of persons, among them widows and orphans, of their life-savings. Subsequently he was convicted and sentenced to prison. Ever since that time I have been on my guard against making Judaism and preaching too comfortable. Judaism may be comforting, but

it is not always a comfortable religion. It has some very disturbing things to say on the subjects of social justice and economic relationships and group conflict. Preaching that claims to be interested in the spiritual welfare of men but ignores the slums that degrade them, the politics that exploit them, the industrial conditions that enslave them, the international relations that slaughter them—well, to my mind that type of preaching is the apotheosis of futility, the superlative illustration of sanctimonious ineffectiveness. It is about as socially constructive as shadow-boxing: its strongest assaults are directed against doors that are wide open.

The faith of Israel is not a flight from reality; it summons men to the task of building here and now the kingdom of God on earth. Jewish preaching must articulate that challenge in unequivocal accents. In the Jewish ministry there is room for many types of preacher: the intellectual, the mystic, the poet, the idealist, the rationalist, all have their legitimate place; there is no place for a coward in the Jewish pulpit. Certainly pulpit and pew will not always see eye-to-eye on the issues that divide men. When Lord Reading was Governor-General of India, Mahatma Gandhi caused him no end of worry and trouble, but after he had talked with him, he declared, "I do not agree with all his opinions, but I am a purer man for having met him." An honest and a manly declaration! Let the Jewish pulpit serve the cause of truth with dignity, with intelligence, with courage and with consecration, and we shall hear less argument about the right of the rabbi to preach on controversial themes.

Today the community of Israel is a people perplexed and disquieted. The tragedy that has befallen our brethren across the ocean has cast a mantle of gloom like a storm cloud above us. Well, you all know what a beautiful thing a rainbow is. It is one of the loveliest creations of God. And you all know, too, how rainbows are made. A rainbow is a storm cloud illumined by a burst of sunlight. And the modern rabbi, through his preaching in the pulpit, has the opportunity and duty to illumine that storm cloud of Jewish tragedy with the radiant word of courage and hope, of loyalty and faith in the God of our Fathers who sleepeth not nor slumbereth.

THE POLICY AND PROGRAM OF REFORM JUDAISM¹

THIS Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, convened at the end of the greatest war in history, in the city where it was organized seventy-three years ago, might well under less urgent and controversial circumstances have been a victory convention. The total and overwhelming triumph of the allied arms over Germany and Japan was much more than a military victory. It was a solemn vindication of the eternal verities which Israel has championed throughout its history, and a gruesome corroboration of the moral law of a God who will not have his plans for human redemption displaced by the blueprints of a Nazi or a Nipponese dictator. This is not the first time that Israel has seen the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.

Our Rabbis tell us that when our fathers were redeemed from Egypt and the heavenly hosts joined them in the Victory Song by the Red Sea, God silenced their rejoicing, saying, "How can you sing to me when my children are perishing?" More eloquently than any current rhetoric, that ancient Midrash reflects the mood of American Israel today. Our hearts are filled with gratitude that the war is over, that our sons and brothers and husbands are home or coming home again, that the forces of evil have been utterly destroyed, but our rejoicing is overcast with sadness as we inventory the havoc that Hitler has wrought upon our fellow Jews. There is little balm in Gilead for the household of Israel whose victims far outnumber the European survivors of teutonic fury, with their pitiful remnant not only sharing the tragic dislocations of their fellow-citizens in all the lands of Nazi terror, but exposed to the backwash of a malevolent and persistent anti-Semitism which poisons the atmosphere and curses the very soil to which they gave their deepest devotion.

It is a sense of anguish over this vast and continuing tragedy, unparalleled in degree and scale even in the millennial experience of a people accustomed to catastrophe, rather than a mood of exaltation that dominates our deliberations today. If there be among us any who fails to share that common sorrow, his spiritual isolationism convicts him of unworthiness to participate in these momentous proceedings.

¹This address was delivered on March 3, 1946 in Cincinnati, Ohio at the 39th Biennial Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations at the Town Hall meeting on the subject "The Policy and Program of Reform Judaism."

This, then, is the background against which we are summoned to formulate a policy and program in America for our cherished faith. In some respects it is unfortunate that our decisions must be hammered out upon the anvil of crisis. However earnest and competent the craftsmen, there is great danger of shortsighted improvisation and extemporaneous judgment. We are an old people. Our most memorable and audacious contributions to mankind were tempered through generations of experience and tested in the global laboratories of the nations. They were not the hurried products of a desperately driven emergency; they were not prompted by opportunism, however plausible or popular. Had we been a people more concerned with its creature comfort and less consecrated to ideals involving discomfort, Abraham would have become a prosperous idol merchant in Mesopotamia, Moses would have been the lion of the respectables in Pharaoh's Court, Jeremiah would have quenched the flaming fire in his bosom, Akiba would have been spared a martyr's pyre—yes, Jesus of Nazareth would have been just another carpenter, and western civilization, without benefit of Bible and moral imperative, would be a barbarian's paradise, without spiritual vision or ethical impetus or messianic goal!

The current tragedy of our European remnant, however, following without interruption upon thirteen years of degradation and mass murder, has compelled us to make decisions in an atmosphere of desperate urgency. It is understandable and beyond criticism that such pragmatic improvisation was imperative in the formulation of our programs for relief, rehabilitation, and rescue. In this effort none have been concerned more deeply or have contributed more liberally than the members of this body. The generosity of American Israel in this crisis—of all classes and factions and groups, affords heartening evidence not only of our continuing loyalty to one of Judaism's most sacred obligations, but to the essential solidarity of the American Jewish community. In all our history we have never failed to close our ranks when we were attacked solely on the grounds of our Jewishness and the paramount consideration was *pikuach nefesh*, the saving of lives. For that we require no justification nor offer any. The Congregation of Israel, however dispersed throughout the world, is a spiritual entity, transcending all the transient forms of political organization in its common allegiance to a divine revelation, our holy Torah, and by that paramount and infrangible bond of union we are joined in spiritual fellowship to our co-religionists in every land on earth. But

this commitment is not, as some have sought to interpret it, redeemable in terms of racial or national solidarity. It eludes the patterns of contemporary political organization, and transcends the convenient pigeonholes of modern racial and national classifications.

Here is where our difficulty arises. The tragedy of Israel in the modern world has produced and given impetus to theories about Judaism and the Jew which many sincere and not altogether uninformed Jews find completely at variance with the classic principles of our faith, irrelevant and inimical to the spirit of America—and indeed the dearest hopes of all men of good will in the postwar world—and dangerously subversive of the welfare of Jews in every land, including Palestine.

Consider in the first place, that the official orientation which has lately been given to Zionism represents a radical and unprecedented departure from the historic principles even of Orthodox and Conservative Judaism. To be sure, the yearning for a return to Palestine was deeply ingrained in the consciousness of countless generations of our pious ancestors. It found classic and eloquent expression in our Sacred Scriptures, in talmudic and rabbinic literature, and especially in the liturgy of the synagogue, where it was articulated with a glowing passion and prophetic fervor that transfigured the humblest Jew into a herald of the Most High, and sent him out into a hostile world with shoulders squared and head erect.

“Gather us from the four corners of the earth;” “Let our eyes behold Thy return in mercy to Zion;”

“Restore the service to the holy place of Thy House; accept in love and favor the burnt offerings and prayers of Israel.”

These citations cannot be cavalierly brushed aside as incidental footnotes to a comprehensive liturgy. The old prayer book repeats them again and again with ecstatic redundancy, as a musical theme recurs in a symphony with deliberate reiteration. (Of course there were many opportunities throughout the centuries for Jews to return to Palestine, but then I suspect that most people neither desire nor intend to square their conduct with their prayer books.) The fact remains, however, that this hope was and still is an organic part of historic Judaism. But write this down and underscore it—*that millen-*

nial hope for national restoration, incontestibly one of the major aspirations of historic Judaism, was thoroughly religious in its motivations and objectives. It was reared upon messianic expectations of a deliverer, who, in God's own good time, would redeem Israel from captivity, restore it to its former country under the rule of a descendant of the House of David, rebuild the Temple and reinstitute the sacrificial cult with all its priestly trappings. That doctrine was buttressed and over-arched by powerful religious convictions. It gave centrality to God and Torah and Mitzvoth;¹ it envisioned the reestablishment of the ancient theocentric state in which religion and government would be inseparably united.

It is a far cry from that historic conception of a restored Jewish state, to the program and pattern which is being so vociferously and violently urged today. Why, the blueprints of modern political Zionism are not even a reasonable facsimile of the classic Jewish conceptions and formulas for the redemption of Palestine. They do not pretend to be. An exalted messianism transfigured the one; a secular nationalism dominates the other. In the old tradition God was central; in the new the corporate Jewish state is apotheosized. "Nationalism" said Richard Gottheil, the historian of Zionism, "is at the very heart of Zionism." The old tradition was unequivocally religious. The new dispensation is unequivocally secular. "Zionism is a secular movement," said its official spokesman at the Washington hearings in 1944. The old tradition was motivated by piety; the new propaganda is propelled by politics. "Zionism is a political movement" is the frank declaration of the Unity for Palestine Committee. The old tradition appealed to the divine mercy in the gentle language of prayer; the new movement is articulated in the truculent idioms of politics, sabotage, and guerrilla warfare.

It is unnecessary to multiply these antitheses. Contemporary Zionism in all its manifestations bears the imprimatur of secular political nationalism, and by that token it is poles apart from historic Judaism.

Solomon Schechter of blessed memory yielded to no one in his fervor for Palestine, and although he was a scholarly spokesman for a more conservative Judaism than we profess, his monitory prophecy on assuming the presidency of the Jewish Theological Seminary might well be pondered today by the

¹ The precepts or commandments which, according to Jewish tradition, were revealed to Moses.

catholic Israel he loved and served so well: "Any attempt to place the center of gravity (in Jewish life) outside the Torah must end in disaster."

Come with me now a little closer to our own philosophy of Judaism, and let us explore the attitude of classical Reform Judaism on the subject of Jewish political nationalism. Here there is not the slightest room for argument or equivocation. Reform Judaism rejected the entire movement, lock, stock and barrel (or if you prefer, land, state, and breviary). Not even our ancient prophets repudiated the heresies of their day more vigorously than the founders of Reform denounced Zionism in all its aspects—messianic, eschatological, religious, national, racial, even philanthropic, and especially its secular political vagaries.

David Philipson, the acknowledged historian of our movement, in his classic "History of the Reform Movement in Judaism," leaves not the least particle of doubt on the subject. "If the Reform Movement teaches anything clearly," he writes, "it is the repudiation of the political and national aspects of traditional Judaism, and the clear declaration that Judaism is a religion with a religious mission;—neo-orthodoxy, Zionism, inconsistent rabbinism, with its canonization of the Shulchan Aruk,¹ . . . these are the backward forces that drive the Jew of modern training and life further and further from his religion and leave him spiritually bankrupt." Why, Reform Judaism began with a declaration of independence from Jewish medievalism that rang out like a fanfare of trumpets: "Only by the absolute separation of the political and religious elements in Judaism," thundered Samuel Holdheim, "is a thoroughgoing Reform possible!" Elsewhere he wrote: "We do not grant that there is such a thing as a Christian state, and certainly we should not speak of a Jewish state, or of the overlapping of the religious and political in Judaism." Listen to Zacharias Frankel, the chief rabbi of Dresden, writing in 1842: "If Judaism is a national religion, the prophets have dreamed vain things and uttered foolish babblings—the issue is well defined—either a common country or a common idea."

You know how those unflinching pioneers resolved that issue! They repu-

¹ "The Authoritative Code of Orthodox Judaism," compiled by Joseph Caro, Venice, 1564.

diated the race-state-religion theory as an anachronism. They scorned the idea that only in Palestine can the Jew live a normal life, and staked their faith and future on that infinitely grander and truer assurance of God:

"In *every* place where I will cause my name to be mentioned, I will come unto thee and bless thee."

"We consider ourselves no longer a nation but a religious community," was the unanimous declaration of a conference of American rabbis in the famous Pittsburgh Platform; and although that historic declaration of principles has become the target for cheap jibes and expensive ridicule, although those who defend it are called traitors and escapists and goy-rabbis and self-hating Jews, as were the founders of our movement by the fanatics of their day, and the prophets in their, and Maimonides in his, and the saintly Isaac M. Wise (who organized this Union) in his: I have yet to hear a responsible Jewish religious organization in this country stand up and say to America: "We Jews in the United States consider ourselves no longer a religious community, but a nation."

In the entire tradition of classical Reform Judaism in America the record of our opposition to Jewish secular nationalism is consistently and uniformly unbroken. (In recent years it has been slightly dented, but thus far the damage is not irrevocable.) It would only be an exercise in academic exhibitionism to pile up corroborating citations. In 1841 when the Reform Jewish Congregation in Charleston, South Carolina dedicated its new synagogue, the rabbi declared: "This country is our Palestine, this city our Jerusalem, this House of God, our Temple," and that sentiment, elaborated and reinforced by rabbis and laymen of learning and consecration, was woven into the warp and woof of the Reform Movement in America. In his presidential address before the Central Conference of American Rabbis in Montreal in 1897, Isaac M. Wise took note of the incipient Zionist Movement and said: "The honor and position of American Israel demand imperatively that this Conference, which does represent the sentiment of American Judaism, minus the idiosyncracies of . . . late immigrants, do declare officially the American standpoint in this unpleasant episode in our history." And the Conference unanimously voted its disapproval of the establishment of a Jewish state in these words:

"Such attempts do not benefit, but infinitely harm our Jewish brethren where they are still persecuted by confirming the assertion of their enemies

that the Jews are foreigners in the countries in which they are at home, and of which they are everywhere the most loyal and patriotic citizens. . . . We affirm that the object of Judaism is not national but spiritual."

My friends, there is nothing in the fundamental principles of Reform Judaism which can support the demand for a Jewish political state in Palestine. This was the case when our movement was launched,—it is more emphatically true today, now that Zionism has been officially declared a secular political program.

In 1936 a Zionist President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis said: "Secular nationalism or any other kind of secular Judaism is contrary to the spirit of a people that has chosen to know God and to be known by Him. At this late date we cannot repudiate our historic contract and change our nature."

Well, the date is even later now, but that contract still binds us, for it is the eternal covenant of a deathless people with an everlasting God. And as for changing our nature, while we recognize and glory in the fact that adaptation to environment is of the very essence of Reform, there are fixed principles which must always guide us on the road of our historic destiny.

Not all change spells progress; retrogression lurks there too. There is a vast difference between evolution, by which an organism or social entity reveals its nature more fully and completely, and devolution, by which it atrophies and shrinks to a sorry remnant of its magnificent promise. "Reform," said David Einhorn, "means a good deal more than external changes. . . . Reform is nothing more than a Jewish religious transformation." Centuries earlier the great Saadiah had written: "We are a people by virtue of Torah" and by that conviction this Union of American Hebrew Congregations has lived and prospered and grown strong in this beloved land.

For it must never be forgotten that there is a vast and essential difference between the patterns into which Jewish life was cast in Europe and those which developed in this country. Elsworth Huntington of Yale University, Terman of Stanford and other eminent scientists and sociologists have conclusively shown the influence of environment upon physical development. A similar phenomenon is observable in the field of social institutions. In the free atmosphere of this blessed land, "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," every old world institution that

was transplanted to these shores underwent profound and enlightened transformation. In politics, jurisprudence, industry, social customs, education, labor and management, international relations, religion—the old world patterns were either deliberately rejected or radically refashioned.

This was especially true of religion, particularly of Judaism, and most conspicuously of Reform Judaism, whose dominating mood reflects the philosophy of the poet who sang:

*"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world..."*

Favored by the generous spiritual climate of this republic, upborne by the powerful impetus to piety with which the Bible-loving pioneers infused the infant commonwealth, emancipated from the old world shackles of inferiority by a Constitution and Bill of Rights which, in the words of Washington "gives to bigotry no sanction," the Reform movement in America found hospitable habitation, and its followers became an integral part of the structure of democracy. But let there be no misunderstanding here. We did not demand or accept equality of citizenship here on the grounds of racial or nationality rights. It was not as a secular national minority, determined to resist integration and cultural assimilation on the basis of the claims of blood and race and peoplehood, that we sought an equal status in this land. It was as followers of an ancient faith, teachers of a hallowed tradition, members of a religious community, that we found a home for ourselves and our Torah in America, and achieved complete and unequivocal rights and obligations in the country to which we give our complete and unequivocal devotion.

But now we and our fellow Americans are undergoing a contrary indoctrination. We are not to be permitted to continue as a religious group. Our status as a religious fellowship is to be changed. We are now to become a national minority group. And incredibly enough the agitation for this astounding transubstantiation comes not from hostile sources outside Israel, but from within our own ranks.

"The Jew is nowhere at home; he remains an alien everywhere." Who said that? It was not taken from the defunct *Dearborn Independent*. Leo Pinsker, one of the prophets of Jewish political nationalism, uttered that infamy.

"Jews shall always remain strangers among the nations." Who pronounced that verdict of Cain? It was not Gerald L. K. Smith. That decision was handed down by Moses Hess, another apostle of secular nationalism.

"There is but one solution for our national homelessness, which is the source of our millennial tragedy—the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine." Who offered that dogmatic diagnosis and panacea? It was the President of the Zionist Organization of America.

"We want to go home . . . home . . . home." Who wailed that pathetic cry? It was not wrung from the tortured lips of a stateless pariah driven by Hitler's fury from his native land. That note of anguish was sounded in San Francisco during the United Nations Conference by a world-renowned American rabbi, speaking (as he modestly announced) in the name of ten million Jews! That includes you and me and our children and all the millions of Jews who proudly claim this land as their homeland and desire no other. That includes our co-religionists all over America whose lives and loyalties are welded to this country with every passionate fiber of their being! That includes our workers and industrialists, our merchants and scholars, our warriors and statesmen, our judges and congressmen, our diplomats and Supreme Court Justices and members of the Cabinet, and advisors to the President of the United States!

Some homelessness! Some aliens!

The simple truth of the matter is that the five million Jews in America do not consider themselves homeless. Neither do the four million Jews in Russia, nor the Jews in Canada or South America or Great Britain, or Australia or the Scandinavian countries.

Certainly there are thousands of Jews in Germany and Poland and elsewhere who are stateless, who have endured suffering beyond description, and who desperately desire to emigrate to Palestine or other lands of freedom. While their numbers are conjectural, they must be very large. And we who are opposed to Jewish political nationalism, are just as profoundly concerned with their plight, and just as ardent to yield them every assistance as have been the most benevolent Zionists. It is an infamous libel which we shall not pass in silence to accuse us of indifference to Jewish suffering because we will not accept Zionism as the solution of the Jewish tragedy in Europe. The record refutes that slander!

Zionists lose no opportunity of claiming all the credit for the developments

in Palestine in recent years, and they have been stupendous. They conveniently forget to mention that non-Zionist generosity is responsible in no small measure for the miracle of modern Palestine. From Baron de Hirsch and Sir Moses Montefiore to Louis Marshall and Felix Warburg and continuing down to the present moment, many who emphatically repudiate secular political nationalism have been among the most devoted builders of Palestine, not as *the* Jewish Homeland, but as *a* homeland, a sanctuary for oppressed Israel. And we continue to support the United Jewish Appeal, even though we know that a not inconsiderable portion of our contributions for relief and rescue are siphoned off to implement in various ways the program and propaganda of political Zionism.

I say that this truculent insistence on Jewish nationality as the authentic status of the Jew in the western world is fraught with grave danger. It bears an ominous resemblance to accusations made against us by the enemies of Israel, accusations which have caused us untold harm and suffering. Don't tell me, as certain advocates of secular nationalism have shouted again and again, that the historic philosophy of integration, for which Reform Judaism stands, was liquidated in the very country of its birth; ergo it has demonstrably failed and ought to be abandoned. The Jews were not the only victims of the Hitler fury. Liberal culture was assassinated in Germany, too; academic freedom and religious liberty, trade unionism and pacifism, freedom of speech and of the press, and every group and doctrine that was heretical by Nazi standards was foully extirpated, with a ruthlessness that finds no parallel in history. But does anyone who has not completely surrendered to cynicism believe that the Germany of Kant and Goethe will not one day be resurrected, that the land which produced a Mendelssohn and Lessing, a Luther and a Niemoeller is doomed forever to remain a graveyard of human liberty? I, for one, do not believe it. In 1290 the Jews were driven from England; in 1391 France turned them out; in 1492 Spain exiled them. Then as now, prophets of doom frenetically screamed that for all time to come no Jew would ever tread again those lands of bigotry. But you know how sadly lacking in perspective was that view.

Hitler shall not have the final word. Days shall come when the miracle of our immemorial resurrection, so often enacted in our history, will again occur in a Germany restored to health and sanity, when the people who walked in

darkness shall see a great light, and the Jew, in common with his German fellow citizens of all faiths, shall live again in freedom and dignity.

The recent candor of official spokesmen for Zionism reveals its true objectives. It is not religious. It is not philanthropic. This, too, is no reformulation of Zionist purpose; it has merely been restated with clarity and vigor. When the Russian Revolution emancipated four million Jews, in whose tortured behalf the movement had been urged, Dr. Chaim Weizmann explicitly stated that "We have never built our Zionist movement on the sufferings of our people in Russia or elsewhere. These sufferings were never the cause of Zionism. The fundamental cause of Zionism was, and is, the ineradicable national striving of Jewry to have a home of its own—a national center with a national Jewish life."

Informed Zionists have always known that political and not humanitarian considerations were at the heart and center of their movement. But they knew, too, that western Jewry, particularly American Israel, would turn a deaf ear to appeals for Palestine based upon uncamouflaged political grounds. Accordingly, it is rescue and relief and rehabilitation that are stressed in public appeals. God knows these considerations are desperately urgent. But the real purposes of Zionism are not rescue and relief and rehabilitation. They are frankly political. Again and again official spokesmen for Zionism have declared that Zionism is not refugeeism, that it is not philanthropy nor rescue nor relief—that on the basis of humanitarian need, Palestine has already done more than its share.

The Zionists are perfectly consistent therefore when they employ every device in the manual of political strategy to further their aims. We have been treated to the spectacle of rabbis marching on Washington, and picket lines thrown around British Consulates. We have seen pictures of American Jews perfecting guerrilla warfare techniques in our country to be employed against a friendly nation. We have heard threats of Jewish reprisals against public officials who do not endorse the Zionist program. Under the pressures of this militant organization, both of the major political parties of our country were brow-beaten into inserting planks in their platforms endorsing Zionist demands, a stratagem as desperate and unwise as it was un-Jewish and un-American. Thousands of hounded Jews in Europe are frantically seeking en-

trance certificates to Palestine, yet despite the pitifully inadequate number available we hear demands for their distribution to Jews who are secure in America and other lands of freedom! Neither religion nor rescue nor relief nor the abrogation of the White Paper are the objectives of this secular nationalism; not 100,000 visas for persecuted Jewry, but one certificate for admittance as a Jewish state into the United Nations is their goal.

This, then, is the movement which seeks our benediction and endorsement. I say we should withhold it. This Union of American Hebrew Congregations has a commitment to an historic task which transcends the claims of secular political nationalism. It has a tradition of loyalty to America which cannot be reconciled with any philosophy of Jewish homelessness. It has an obligation to relieve distress which dare not yield priority to Zionist politics. Our task today is to salvage human lives, to heal the hurt that cruelty has inflicted, to hold high in a world tragically confused a light for all mankind to steer by. Israel's voice today should not be an echo of that ancient cry "Make us a king that we may be like other nations," but a strong and solemn affirmation of that nobler truth: "Not by virtue of material strength and political power shall ye prevail, but by my spirit," saith the Lord."

What then shall be the policy and program of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in this controversial situation?

This Union is composed of congregations whose constituents are deeply divided in their views on Zionism. Their convictions demand and deserve the respect that each of us claims for his own. They will not compromise; they will not equivocate; they will not have forced upon them overtly or by subterfuge any commitment which violates their unconsenting consciences. They will not have their names and influence invoked to sanction or support an interpretation of Judaism which they consider inadequate and fragmentary on the one hand, or reactionary and erroneous on the other. Nor will they accept, for the sake of a specious and artificial unity, a minority status in this religious fellowship whereby they would be merely tolerated. We must not commit the rash and unwarranted error of fragmentizing this greatest religious organization of Jewry in the world, by adopting a policy and program which would in effect establish gradations in the character of its constituency. It is lamentable enough that such distinctions exist in individual congrega-

tions for financial reasons. That they should arise from reasons of conscience is intolerable and a *billul ha-shem*, a profanation of the name of God.

The Union must, therefore, in the light of the diverse and irreconcilable convictions of its constituency meet this situation realistically. I advocate a policy of genuine and honest neutrality on the subject of Zionism. I recommend that the program of the Union conform scrupulously to that policy.

This does not involve any sacrifice of essential principles for any congregation or individual in this Union. It simply means that this organization shall not be used to advance the interests or prestige of either Zionism or anti-Zionism. There are other organizations through which we, as individuals, can make articulate and effective our convictions on this issue.

This policy of neutrality, if adopted, must be meticulously adhered to in good faith. It may demand of both the Union and its duly constituted official representatives certain renunciations. It may curtail and circumscribe their activities in some directions. This may be unfortunate and at times irksome, but it is unavoidable if we are to remain united and harmonious. It is an inevitable condition which certain kinds of public service exact. It is not too high a price to pay for the preservation of this body and the pursuit of its essential and primary tasks.

Under the terms of this armistice no resolution or project associated in any way with Zionism or anti-Zionism would be presented to this body. Zionism must be kept out of our religious school textbooks and teaching materials. Many Jewish children in America are developing a split-personality neurosis. On week days they pledge allegiance to the American flag, and on Sabbaths they pay homage to an improvised Jewish flag. Many of us are unconvinced that this does not involve a question of dual allegiance. We are convinced that it has contributed to the confusion and loss of inner security of myriads of our children. If Zionism, as its spokesmen have declared, is neutral on the subject of religion, then religion can be neutral on the subject of Zionism.

The matter of customs and ceremonies in the synagogue, the religious school and the home has been the subject of some debate. Unquestionably ceremonies and customs are invaluable aids to piety. Our Reform movement has long suffered from over-intellectualism. It lacks warmth and fervor. Whether these can be recaptured is problematical; certainly there is no good reason why the effort should not be made. Here again we must not deviate

from our neutrality on Zionism. The ceremonies of the American Reform synagogue and home must not be vehicles for the indoctrination of Jewish political nationalism.

Such a policy and program as I have suggested may be unacceptable. Most assuredly it will not please the extremists in either faction. Frankly, it does not accord with my own deepest lifelong convictions. Were I to be guided solely by my own predilections, I would prefer that the Union stand by the historic traditions of Reform Judaism, and repudiate Jewish political nationalism. But we dare not destroy this organization to satisfy our personal preferences.

For we have a solemn and imperious duty laid upon us in the Atomic Age upon which we have entered. The forces of materialism that are rampant in our time demand spiritual and ethical direction, if our world is not to perish in its blindness. Our own household of Israel are like sheep that have strayed from their shepherd. The secularists among us must be recalled from their ungodly chauvinism, and the anti-Zionists must be challenged to square their religious delinquency with their professions of piety. The famine which Amos predicted is come upon us, "not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." We have come to a sorry pass when we can assemble a larger gathering of Jews to denounce Zionism than to glorify God, and a far greater audience to sing *Hatikvah*¹ before a Jewish flag than *En Kelo-henu*² before the Aron Hakodesh.³

I say that these conditions challenge us as never before. History will not forgive us if we fail. If our civilization should indeed destroy itself with the instruments which modern science has placed in our unworthy hands, let some explorer in a distant day, seeking a memorial of us in its crystalline ruins, come upon no such ignoble epitaph as "A kingdom of priests sold its birthright for a mess of pottage," or this pathetic anti-climax: "God offered them world priesthood but they failed Him." But rather let him find the record of an unique people that remained constant to its covenant at Sinai, worthy to the last of the divine investiture: "'Ye are my witnesses,' saith the Lord, 'and my servant whom I have chosen'."

¹ The Israeli National Anthem.

² A religious hymn glorifying God.

³ The Ark in the synagogue containing the Torah, or Five Books of Moses.

ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES¹

THE sense of pleasure and privilege I feel in addressing you today is even greater than on former occasions when I have stood in this distinguished rostrum. For me, this meeting climaxes a seven weeks' transcontinental speaking tour. It is good to be home again; it is refreshing and soul-restoring to breathe again the invigorating physical and, more especially, the stimulating cultural climate of my beloved San Francisco. You will, I am sure, indulge me as your fellow-member, to express the delight and pride I take in my membership in the Commonwealth Club of California. For nearly twenty-one years now, corresponding to my ministry in this city, I have been a member of this organization, and during that time I have experienced an ever-deepening admiration for the integrity of this forum and its devotion to the ideal of free speech when responsibly uttered. This Commonwealth Club has more than the courage of its convictions; it has the courage to listen to convictions it rejects. And in that virtue, I suggest, is reflected the uniqueness of democracy and its recognition of the dignity of every human being.

The subject which I was invited to discuss with you today, "Israel and the United States," involves controversies more acute than any that have agitated the Jews of America since the first representatives of our faith who accompanied Columbus on his voyages of discovery set foot on this hemisphere. I shall later turn to this aspect of our subject. Let me, however, begin by recalling that the State of Israel was officially launched on May 14, 1948, and has just rounded out the third year of its independent existence as a nation. History affords few if indeed any parallels to the extraordinary progress which this lusty infant has achieved in so brief a time. Geographically, the State of Israel is unimpressively small—its total area is a little over 8100 square miles, which represents about 79 per cent of the territory included in the original League of Nations Mandate to Great Britain. Yet this tiny country, insignificant in size but incalculable in potential, has in the past exercised an enormous influence in the shaping of human culture, and may again affect profoundly the course of world events.

The international importance of Israel derives chiefly from its strategic location in one of the world's vital areas. Since the dawn of recorded history

¹ An address delivered to the Commonwealth Club of California, at the Palace Hotel, San Francisco, May 18, 1951.

it has been the bridge for the march of caravans and armies between Asia and Africa, and in our own time military experts believe that any change in control of this region might be enough to swing the balance of power in favor of Moscow or Washington. In the areas contiguous to Israel are located 42 per cent of the world's known oil reserves, with an annual production that has increased from sixteen million tons in 1938 to over one hundred million tons in 1950 and is estimated at over five hundred million tons for 1960. Were Russia to gain control there, her problem of fuel supply in the event of war would be solved, thereby securing an immense strategic superiority over the western democracies in the entire Mediterranean area and even beyond. Under the circumstances, and quite independent of other considerations, it is understandable why the government of the United States is vitally and benevolently concerned with the status and destiny of Israel.

Moreover, the United Nations has a crucial stake in the welfare of this state. Nowhere in the world, not excepting Korea, is its prestige more intimately involved. For Israel, although in its own right a member of the United Nations, is also in a very real sense the responsibility of the United Nations. That organization, through its commission headed by Ralph Bunche, negotiated the truce which ended the Arab-Israeli war, and is officially the guardian of the nominal but uneasy peace that prevails between the infant state and its Arab neighbors, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria. A realistic appraisal of the threat that hangs over our world, involves facing up to the explosive possibilities inherent in Arab-Israeli relations. Small wonder, then, that the recent clashes on the Syrian frontier made front-page headlines. It was not concern about the seven acres of contested land in the Huleh marshes drainage project that caused a tremor of apprehension in the Security Council and the Foreign Offices; it was the informed awareness that in the existing dangerous Near and Middle East tensions a single rifle shot might set off a chain reaction that could encircle the globe.

In certain quarters it is maintained that the creation of the State of Israel represents the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. That this claim can be impressively supported by citations from Holy Writ is undeniable, although the extent to which this circumstance influenced the international political decisions attending the birth of Israel was hardly perceptible. It is much more to the point to attribute the emergence of the state to the efforts of the World

Zionist Organization. For more than a half century, this international body pursued with steadfast tenacity and unswervable dedication its objective: "to create for the Jewish people a publicly and legally assured home in Palestine."

The founder of this movement, who is properly revered in Israel today as the father of the state, was Theodor Herzl. Born in Budapest in 1860, he studied law in Vienna, but acquired his early reputation in the fields of drama and journalism. When the Dreyfus scandal rocked France near the end of the century, Herzl was assigned by the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* to cover the story. Sitting in the French courtroom day after day and seeing the waves of anti-Semitism mount higher and higher over the innocent Jewish officer, Herzl despaired of any secure future for the Jew in the western world, and advocated the withdrawal of all Jews into a country of their own. This thesis he elaborated in a treatise entitled "Der Judenstaat" (The Jewish State), which he published in 1896. Herzl died in 1904, but his book became the authoritative handbook of Jewish political nationalism and laid the foundations for the Zionist movement, which, after many vicissitudes and struggles, disappointments and reverses, finally culminated triumphantly in the establishment on May 14, 1948, of the State of Israel. It was immediately recognized by the United States of America, and subsequently by most of the nations of the world. The first President, Chaim Weizmann, who is credited with having secured the Balfour Declaration from Great Britain, was inaugurated on February 17, 1949, and in the following month the state was admitted into membership in the United Nations. It is highly interesting that this crowning recognition was sponsored jointly by the United States and Russia.

Most of you need hardly be reminded that the bitterest opposition to the establishment of the state came from Arabs within and outside of Palestine. On the day following the proclamation of Israel's independence, the Arab League invaded its borders, determined to crush the audacious republic and drive its overwhelmingly outnumbered defenders into the Mediterranean. What followed constitutes an astounding epic in military annals.

The Israeli army—the Haganah—looked formidable enough on paper, and indeed many of its soldiers were tough, seasoned veterans, intelligent and utterly fearless. But by far the most were students from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, colonists from the communal settlements, artisans and shopkeepers and farmers from Galilee and Tel-Aviv. They lacked rifles and ammu-

nition and machine-guns; their armored cars were the improvisations of amateurs. "They flew in planes," wrote an on-the-spot British journalist, "that were an insult to aerodynamics; they fought with rifles and revolvers that were a menace to themselves and their friends." But they won! They stopped the armies of Egypt in their tracks; they saved Jerusalem and they hurled back the Syrians: everywhere they were triumphant. The Arab forces broke and reeled before the furious onslaughts of men and women who had survived the Hitler horror. For them death on the field of battle was a sweet and welcome alternative to the barbed-wire pens of Cyprus and the crematoriums of Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

On June 11, after four weeks of fighting, and five cease-fire appeals by the United Nations Security Council, Count Folke Bernadotte succeeded in bringing about a truce. Over 20,000 casualties had been sustained, property losses were considerable, and over a half-million Arabs had either abandoned or been driven from their homes and property in Israel. It is difficult to determine the exact number of Arab expatriates—recently the *New York Times* reported that 700,000 to 800,000 Arab refugees were drawing assistance from the United Nations Works and Rehabilitation Administration. These displaced Arabs not only pose serious problems in resettlement, restitution, and rehabilitation, but represent a difficult ethical and moral challenge to the conscience of the State of Israel and the United Nations. Surely Israel cannot be expected to re-admit a large potential fifth column into its territory so long as no secure peace has been established. And the Arab League and the United Nations will probably not agree to their permanent exclusion as part of a general settlement.

When the state was established, there were 650,000 Jews in the country. Today, after three years of practically unrestricted Jewish immigration, that figure has nearly doubled, and was announced this week as 1,275,000. There are about 175,000 Arabs and 45,000 Christians in the country, making its total population about one and one-half million. During 1949, about 240,000 Jews entered the country; in 1950, 170,000 came in. New immigrants are pouring in at the rate of from 12,000 to 20,000 a month, and as Prime Minister Ben Gurion again declared in New York last week, the state is driving for a goal of 600,000 additional Jewish immigrants during the next three years. By far the greater part of this immigration has come from Central Europe and the

Balkans, streaming out of the displaced persons' camps in Germany and Austria, and from Cyprus, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. More recently, and at the present time, most of the newcomers are arriving from Yemen, Iran and Iraq. A year ago there were 135,000 Jews in Iraq. Following the announcement of the Iraq government that all Jews who renounced their citizenship would be permitted to leave the country, about 105,000 registered for immigration to Israel. Fifty thousand of these have already gone; the rest are being flown out at the rate of twenty thousand monthly. This mass immigration constitutes one of the most astounding phenomena of our times. Israel is the one country on earth whose gates are open continually to receive and welcome Jews from anywhere without regard to immigration quotas. Indeed, the classic Zionist formula for the "*kibbutz galuyot*"—the "ingathering of the exiles"—is being steadily and systematically applied with varying pressures and techniques upon Jewish communities throughout the world. Moreover, it is as deplorable as it was inevitable that the establishment of the State of Israel has created situations of crisis for Jews in Arab countries, from which predicament emigration to Israel offers the readiest solution. Most of the money to pay for this gigantic enterprise of removal and resettlement has come from the contributions of American Jews through the United Jewish Appeal, and the independent fund-raising campaigns of various Zionist organizations. One will search in vain for a precedent or parallel to a philanthropic achievement of comparable magnitude.

The political organization of Israel is along the lines of a socialist democracy, with a President elected by the Knesset, or Parliament, and a Prime Minister who is the responsible head of the government. The first elections took place on January 25, 1949. The right-wing Labor Party "Mapai" polled the greatest vote, 35.8 per cent of the total, followed by the left-wing Labor Party "Mapam" with 16.3 per cent, and the Religious bloc emerged third with 12.3 per cent. The remaining votes were scattered among various smaller parties. In the absence of a clear majority, Mr. Ben Gurion, the leader of the dominant Mapai party, was unable to form a government, and had to invite one of the other two parties to join him. Unfortunately he seems to have had only a Hobson's choice between the vigorously socialistic Mapam, which advocates a policy of strict neutrality in the cold war between East and West and is favorably inclined toward Russia, and the Religious bloc, an improvised union

of four orthodox groups dominated by the Israeli rabbinate. He chose the latter, yielding it the cabinet portfolios of Religion, Immigration, Internal Affairs, Public Health, and Social Welfare. The results have been startling. Orthodox Judaism is practically an established state religion. It is the only form of Judaism recognized by the state; its rabbis and other functionaries are paid by the state. Orthodox synagogues, ritual baths for women, rabbinical seminaries and religious schools are built and maintained out of public funds; no Reform or Conservative Rabbi is permitted to officiate at a Jewish marriage ceremony; no civil marriage is recognized by the state. Rabbinical courts alone have jurisdiction over divorces. The importation of non-kosher meat is banned; prayers in the synagogues must be conducted only in Hebrew, men must wear their hats, and no music is allowed. This astonishing attempt to force theocratic forms of life on its citizens by a modern, democratic and socialist form of government has caused consternation and embarrassment to many supporters of the state, who see in the application of police power to enforce the demands of an Orthodox rabbinical hierarchy a denial not only of the spiritual essence of Judaism, but of the democratic principle of freedom of conscience and separation of church and state. Jewish rabbinical organizations in the United States and elsewhere have registered solemn protests against this theocratic authoritarianism, denouncing it as a travesty on both religion and democracy. Recently Ben Gurion's government, after innumerable concessions to the fanatical Religious bloc, finally halted its policy of appeasement on a question involving rabbinical control of the education of children in the immigrant camps. A political crisis followed, and as a result the coalition government fell. New elections are scheduled for July 30th. The results will be awaited with considerable interest and concern, not only in view of the militancy of the left-wing Mapam party, but because the recent immigration to Israel has consisted overwhelmingly of Oriental Jews from Arab and Moslem countries, whose rigid and reactionary orthodoxy is expected to strengthen the Religious bloc.

The physical developments that are taking place in Israel are of such epic proportions as to suggest that the miracles ascribed to the Holy Land were not exhausted in biblical times. For centuries this land lay parched and fallow, stagnant and neglected, its impoverished inhabitants pursuing a vacuous primitive existence relieved only by the inevitable crises of birth and death,

of exploitation and famine. Today the land is alive with activity and achievement. The Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, with fifteen hundred students, has achieved a position of eminence among the world's great institutions of learning, its faculty augmented by great European scholars who fled from Nazi persecution. Scientific research on the technical level in physics, physical chemistry, biology and biochemistry is going forward at the Weitzmann Institute in Rehovoth. The Israeli Symphony Orchestra, a state radio, a national museum, institutes of painting and sculpture, and rapidly developing stage and screen enterprises, reflect the artistic genius and the avidity for culture of the population. Industries are being developed, new highways are being built, bridges, railway and bus terminals and airports are springing up all over the land. On May first the Israel National Air Lines inaugurated a semi-weekly air service from New York to Israel with Constellation planes; the Lydda airport handles an increasing flow of international traffic, and is the largest and best-equipped in the Middle East. The shipping industry is being rapidly expanded; the ZIM Navigation Company alone has nineteen ships in operation, including four passenger vessels and five freighters making regular runs between Israel and New York. Afforestation is proceeding apace: in the Jerusalem corridor alone six million trees are being planted to commemorate the six million Jews murdered by Hitler. New Israeli settlements dot the entire country; farms and orchards, livestock and poultry are cultivated with the latest techniques of scientific husbandry. A system of free public education makes school attendance compulsory for all children between the ages of six and eleven; by 1952 the upper age limit will go up to thirteen. Recent legislation requires all young people between fourteen and seventeen who have had no previous education to attend public school; trade and vocational schools, institutes for teacher-training, and schoolhouses are springing up everywhere. The Israeli army is unquestionably the most effective military force in the Middle East. It can muster 200,000 trained troops organized on a motorized basis; from the standpoint of intelligence, discipline and competence it ranks with the finest fighting forces of any western armies. Flushed with success in its recent triumph over the Arab League, and inspired with a messianic sense of high destiny, its morale is incomparably superior to any force it might face in the foreseeable future. In short, the State of Israel today reflects in microcosm the sturdiest, most dynamic and vigorous elements of

western civilization, as well as its complex economic, social, political and international problems. Of the latter there are particularly three which warrant brief mention and comment.

One major problem which confronts Israel is in relation to the Arabs. Their hostility to the new state is deep and passionate. The Arab radio and press maintain an incessant campaign of threats of a "second round" against Israel; the Arab League sternly sets its face against converting the prevailing truce into a formal peace. Iraq, to spite Israel, sacrifices large royalties rather than permit its oil through the pipe line to Haifa; the adjacent Moslem countries continue their stringent boycott of Israeli goods and services. Last week the Arab Chambers of Commerce, meeting in Alexandria, adopted a resolution proposing that all Arab countries pass laws providing the death penalty for any citizen of an Arab state who carries on business with Israel. This truculent attitude is a two-edged sword, cutting the Arabs off from Israeli-manufactured products and commodities which could prove enormously useful, and depriving the infant republic of a valuable market which would help to stabilize her economy. Israel has shown a disposition to make many concessions to get the peace she needs; the large sums and considerable manpower indispensable to safeguard her security could then be freely turned to constructive projects. Until the Arabs come to terms with the solid fact that Israel is here to stay, and Israel succeeds in convincing the Arabs of her benevolent and good-neighborly intentions, the tensions in the Middle East will continue to plague both communities and be a source of anxiety to the rest of the world.

A second critical problem confronting Israel, deriving in considerable part from the first, is a shortage of manpower. Surrounded by 40,000,000 hostile neighbors, the infant republic is a tiny Israeli island in an unfriendly Moslem sea. During the Arab-Israel war, with a Jewish population of 650,000, Israel was able to put six divisions in the field. Now, with her present population about a million and a half, and increasing, although she could readily muster 200,000 troops, many more might be needed to insure her security. Moreover, the extensive plans for stepping up the economy of the country and developing its potential require a larger population. Hence the drive for increased immigration to augment the refugees from persecution, the pressures and propaganda to direct Jews from all over the world to the new state. Hence

the sacrificial sharing of resources and creature comforts with new arrivals; the severe austerity program in the interests of making one meal feed three persons. To recognize that political security and economic necessity are factors in the unprecedented wave of Israeli immigration, is not to detract from the miracle of resettlement whose magnitude is unparalleled in history.

The third critical problem facing Israel is financial. Despite heavy taxation and stringent economies, the national budget is considerably in excess of the national income. In 1950-51 the income from taxes, imports and levies amounted to \$124,600,000, whereas the national budget was \$347,000,000, exclusive of an undisclosed amount for defense. In 1950 imports amounted to 102,600,000 pounds, exports were only 13,200,000 pounds. A major source of income has been the contributions from Jewish communities all over the world, particularly the United States. Lifted by the desperate need of the survivors of the Hitler fury to heights of altruism unequalled in the long record of man's humanity to man, and organized as no philanthropic enterprise on record, American Jews have poured out a golden stream of benevolence to succor and repatriate their destitute co-religionists. During the years 1947-1950 the total of all funds raised for Israel from all sources in the United States amounted to over 400 million dollars; the current campaign of the United Jewish Appeal has set its goal at \$203,600,000. A \$500,000,000 bond issue is now being floated in the United States, as part of a three-year plan to raise one and a half billion dollars to absorb 600,000 immigrants and finance a development program designed to achieve national economic stability.

Members of the Israeli cabinet, including Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, are presently visiting the United States to promote the sale of these securities. The American Export-Import Bank has already extended a loan of \$135,000,000 to the state, and legislation is pending in Congress to provide a government loan of \$150,000,000. The birth of a nation entails extraordinary expenditures, and the State of Israel affords no exception to this political axiom. Our government has evinced a sympathetic understanding of Israel's financial needs, and is helping to strengthen its position as an outpost of democracy in the Middle East.

And now, in the time remaining, let me revert to my introductory statement that there are issues involved in this subject on which there is profound

diversity among American Jews. May I say quite frankly, that were I to follow the dictates of expediency, I would avoid all reference to this controversy as carefully as a cautious aviator detours around a thunderstorm. But when one has spent his whole career in willing and devoted service to a great cause, even though he may be a retired soldier, he cannot just silently fade away.

The State of Israel exists. Every American, every believer in human freedom and the inalienable rights of man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness must wish it well. Most earnestly may we hope for its prosperity and peace, and help it to become a stronghold of enlightened democracy, with security and justice for all its inhabitants. If there is any Jew in America who does not share these sentiments, I have not met him.

Unfortunately, however, the claims of Zionism upon American Jews are not fulfilled within the framework of these declarations. That movement seeks to redefine the classic status of American Jews as members of a religious community in terms of Jewish political nationalism. To serve the state which it created, Zionism would impose upon every American of the Jewish faith a sense of national unity. It seeks effectively to control the religious, communal, educational, philanthropic and cultural life of all American Jews in the interest of solidarity with the State of Israel, and to bind us to that state with obligations and responsibilities that range beyond the areas of rescue, relief, rehabilitation and religious fellowship.

Now these are formidable allegations. They can be amply substantiated; indeed informed and discerning Zionists freely and aggressively proclaim them as commendable objectives. I am not speaking now of benevolent party members whose concepts of Zionism are purely philanthropic or religious. They are naive. They are mistaken. Nor am I dealing here with fire-eating chauvinists in the movement whose excessive zeal can be brushed aside as irresponsible fanaticism. Every political movement has its quota of eccentrics and fanatics. When I say that the claims of Zionism upon American Jews go beyond the obligations of philanthropy and religious fellowship, I am speaking of the official principles of the movement and the statements of its authorized spokesmen.

Let me cite a few that are typical. Daniel Frisch was the President of the Zionist Organization of America until his recent untimely death. In that capacity he was the official spokesman for Zionism. Here is his definition of the

status of the American Jew: "Jews are members of a collective Jewish nation which has its center in the State of Israel."

Emanuel Neumann, another President of the Zionist Organization of America, following the establishment of the State of Israel, said this to a national convention of Zionists in his presidential address: "The Zionist revolution in Jewish life will go on. . . . Its real spirit will not be stilled before it has revolutionized our life and recast it in new molds . . . until the suffering of generations and the centuries of torment shall have been requited by the redemption of the whole Jewish people."

Dr. Neumann's use of the phrase, "the redemption of the whole Jewish people," is significant. It is not new. It is as old as Zionism. It *is* Zionism.

Theodor Herzl was the founder of modern Zionism. As I said earlier, his treatise "The Jewish State" laid the foundations for the movement. Lest this be construed as a partisan opinion, listen to Abba Hillel Silver, a former President of the Zionist Organization of America and of the American Section of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. "The classic textbook of Zionism," said Dr. Silver before the proclamation of the state, "is not how to get 100,000 Jews to Palestine. It is 'The Jewish State' . . . Palestine is the land of our destiny." And if you turn to Herzl's "The Jewish State" among the four cardinal objectives of Zionism which he lists you will find these as the second and third points: "The centralization of the entire Jewish people by means of general institutions" and "the strengthening of Jewish sentiments and national self-consciousness."

Now these quotations are not torn from their context. Most card-holders in the Zionist Organization of America, Hadassah and their affiliates do not, I am certain, subscribe to them. They are probably as unaware of them as is the average Democratic or Republican voter of the party platforms which his suffrage endorses. But they are none the less true, and the higher echelons of Zionist leadership are assiduously pursuing them and scoring victory after victory.

Let me give you a few more citations:

In 1949 a brilliant historian and essayist, Joseph Heller, published a book entitled "The Zionist Idea." It is described on the jacket as "a clear and succinct exposition of the idea and forces upon which the Zionist Movement and the State of Israel are based." Lest there be any doubt of its reliability, the title

page carries the legend: "Special Edition for the Zionist Organization of America." That makes it official. On page 4, Dr. Heller writes, "Zionism considers the Jews all over the world to be actually a nation." On page 74 he says, "One of the principal objects of Zionism is to 'strengthen and foster Jewish national sentiment and national consciousness.' . . . It is of paramount importance . . . to strengthen the position of Hebrew as a national language common to all sections of world Jewry." And again, on page 226, Dr. Heller says: "For the Jews, Israel is their only national homeland. . . . The Jewish settlement in Palestine represents the vital interests of the whole of Jewry, and is the *lodestar and anchor of hope for all its scattered members*." This is Zionism. This is official. In the name of five million American citizens of the Jewish faith I denounce it as a gross and mischievous distortion of their true convictions. *The vital interests of American Jews as well as their lodestar and anchor of hope are centered in the United States of America!*

Nahum Goldmann is the Chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency, the over-all governing body of American Zionism. Speaking in New York on May 25, 1950, this is how he describes the movement: "The present task of Zionism," said Dr. Goldmann, "is primarily the task of binding the Jews in the Diaspora to the State of Israel. It is a task which runs counter to normal developments which tend to estrange the Jew from the state. The Jew here (in America) is rooted and interested in his own life, and the test of Zionism is to overcome the gap between him and Israel."

There you have it again! The attempt of Zionism to nationalize the Jews of America is in complete defiance of the natural and normal development of Judaism and its followers in this country. The whole trend of Jewish life in the United States was to break down every wall of separation between the Jew and his non-Jewish neighbor, reserving alone the priceless American privilege of freedom of conscience and of worship. How many fierce and victorious battles were fought on this issue!

Let me quote from another source, which, by way of contrast, faithfully mirrors the real sentiments of my American co-religionists. Some years ago, Judge Irving Lehman, Chief Justice of the New York State Court of Appeals, speaking on the subject of Zionism, said this:

" . . . I cannot for an instant recognize that the Jews as such constitute a nation in any sense in which that word is recognized in political science, or

that a national basis is a possible concept for modern Judaism. We Jews in America, bound to the Jews of other lands by our common faith, constituting our common inheritance, cannot as American citizens feel any bond to them as members of a nation, for nationally we are Americans and Americans only, and in political and civic matters we cannot recognize any other ties. We must therefore look for the maintenance of Judaism to those spiritual concepts which constitute Judaism.”

Just so! There speaks the authentic voice of the Jews in the United States.

Let me conclude with a stirring incident recorded in the Bible. In the ninth century before the Common Era, an autocrat named Ahab was king of Israel. Again and again he invaded the personal liberties of his subjects and the ideals of freedom and justice which the founders of the state had written into its constitution. The times called for a man of vision and courage to put an end to his encroachments. The Bible tells us that such a man was the farmer Naboth, whose vineyards adjoined the extensive grounds of the king.

In ancient Israel, the right of a man to unmolested possession of his homestead was regarded as sacred. When King Ahab, therefore, decided to extend his palace grounds and demanded that Naboth surrender his land to him, he knew that he was invading one of the most fundamental rights of his subjects. Grown reckless through power and popularity, and accustomed to the apathetic acquiescence of the people in their loss of civil rights, he did not expect any opposition to his demand. Imagine his amazement, therefore, when this humble peasant confronted him resolutely with this memorable reply: “The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.”

The American Jewish community stands today where Naboth stood. Like King Ahab in ancient Israel, grown accustomed to acquiescence, Zionism today is invading areas of life, liberty and happiness sacred to American Jews, and more precious than any which our fathers have bequeathed us. Like Naboth, we propose to meet this issue with his historic words: “The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.”

IS SOCIAL PROGRESS FACT OR FICTION?¹

MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR CLASS: You are about to bid farewell to the friendly security of this academic environment. From the benevolent seclusion of this picturesque campus so dear to your hearts, and to which your love and loyalty will grow ever stronger as the cords of memory lengthen, you shall presently go forth into the clamorous highways of life.

Our world can well benefit by a transfusion into its anemic arteries of those resources for courageous living which properly constitute the chief incentive and ultimate goal of liberal learning. If you come bearing gifts of character and conduct honestly forged on the anvil of personal and scholastic discipline, you have merited the benediction of your university and justified the faith of many in the social value of higher education.

You are aware, I am sure, that the world today, skeptical as it is of almost everything that for centuries men have held sacred, is doubtful of the worth of education. Do you know that men everywhere are saying that it has failed? We are witnessing today on a scale unprecedented in human history what President Butler calls "the perpetually recurrent manifestations of infancy," and the air is filled with jeremiads lamenting that our universities have not given us the leadership which our perplexed generation so urgently needs.

For the new world which awaits you just beyond the threshold of this Commencement Week is a world in the throes of an astounding social upheaval. Portfolios are surrendered for passports, maps are torn apart and pasted together in crazy-quilt confusion, millions starve while food decays, poverty grows desperate in the midst of unprecedented riches; all the impressive apparatus of a triumphant technology makes confusion more efficiently confounded, while Authority mops her bewildered brow in utter dismay at the mounting list of disregarded prohibitions. The wall is covered with writing, but there is no Daniel to read its meaning.

Under the circumstances it is frightfully difficult for a teacher of religion and ethics to carry conviction when he pleads for allegiance to those elevated standards of living that have from time immemorial furnished the theme for baccalaureate speakers. How can we urge that justice exalt a nation when precisely the opposite is taking place in our time? If we affirm that "the work

¹ Baccalaureate Address, University of California Commencement Exercises, May 14, 1939, Berkeley, California.

of righteousness shall be peace," behold how the tactics of gangster diplomacy prevail at the international conference table! We declare that "the wicked are like chaff which the wind driveth away," yet see how it is not the wicked but the innocent who are delivered up to that fate. We have taught that honesty is the best policy, but Aldous Huxley says, "At no period of the world's history has organized lying been practiced so shamelessly or, thanks to modern technology, so efficiently or on so vast a scale as by the political and economic dictators of the present century." The world seems topsy-turvy and all the beautiful and elevated maxims of enlightened ethics and religious morality have a hollow, mocking sound. Dictatorship and militarism advance triumphantly from one success to another. Evildoers were never so prosperous and men of low aims and brutal instincts were never so triumphant in so many directions. The plain unvarnished truth of the matter is that not justice but injustice seems to work, not righteousness but iniquity carries off the rewards, and those who ride on the high places of the earth are not the humble and the God-fearing, but the arrogant and the blasphemous.

It would be idle to pretend that this sort of moral economy is not terribly discouraging to the advocates of decency and honor. Small wonder, then, that thoughtful people everywhere are asking whether social progress is a myth or a reality, a verifiable fact or an ingenious fiction. When we talk about social progress, are we simply indulging in wishful thinking, deluding ourselves with rhetoric which has no corresponding reality? To use the language of Stuart Chase, are we employing words that have no actual referents in real life? It is that question that I should like to consider with you this afternoon.

Sociologists are familiar with the argument that the concept of social progress is a modern idea, that it is the child of the Darwinian theory and the Industrial Revolution. As a matter of fact, the concept of social progress is not modern. It is very old. You can find it in the Hebrew prophets and in the literature of the Greeks and Romans. The peoples of antiquity permitted their fertile imaginations to wander in Elysian fields and in the realms of messianic speculation. But it remained for modern generations to implement that ancient concept with a declaration of confidence in the reality of social progress. So we find Herbert Spencer elaborating this theory with a conviction and an emphasis that reverberated throughout the academic world. Listen to Walter Bagehot, another nineteenth-century idol of sociology. "We

have in society," wrote Bagehot, in "Physics and Politics," "a continuous force which binds age to age, which enables each to begin with some improvement on the last . . . which makes each civilization not a set of detached dots, but a line of color, surely enhancing shade by shade." That is typical of the confidence in the reality of social progress as a continuous force which ruled the minds of intellectuals well before the turn of the century and beyond. Tennyson was expressing a tremendously popular conviction, when he wrote:

*"Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns."*

Had the question we are considering this afternoon been broached to the school of thought to which these men belonged, the answer would have been a ringing affirmative, because they believed that social progress was the normal and the inevitable quality of social change.

We are not so sure about that today. As a matter of fact, the literature of sociology has been augmented by a considerable number of authoritative works which challenge the whole theory of the reality of social progress. Thus, you will find Max Nordau and von Hartmann, Tolstoy and Spengler, elaborating the thesis that civilization reached its zenith long ago and is hastening toward disintegration and chaos. The very titles of their books advertise their disillusionment and pessimism: "Degeneration" and "The Decline of the West." Robert Lynd raises his eyebrows skeptically and asks, "Knowledge For What?" and goes on to declare that "our contemporary world is losing its confidence in the inevitability of progress . . . The scholar-scientist," he says, "is in acute danger of being caught 'lecturing on navigation while the ship is going down'."

Students of philosophy know that hedonists maintain that the savage roaming his jungle is far happier than civilized man. Indeed, the story is told of a savage who, in his old age, went back to his tribe saying that he had tried civilization for forty years and concluded that it was not worth the trouble. I suspect that there are many people today in Russia or Germany or Italy, or for that matter in our own country, who would agree with that savage.

But whether we take sides with the optimists or the pessimists on this question, with those who affirm or those who deny the reality of social prog-

ress, on one thing, I believe, we shall all agree: that it is not an easy task to evaluate social change in terms of gain or loss. Some years ago we adopted an eighteenth amendment to our Constitution, outlawing the liquor traffic. Was that a social gain or loss? Thousands of reformers applauded it as a tremendous step in social progress, but what about the billion dollars' worth of property that was confiscated by that measure; the unemployment, bootlegging, the growth of gangsterism and graft and corruption and juvenile delinquency and crime? Subsequently we rescinded that eighteenth amendment, to the gratification of a majority of the voters of the country, who hailed repeal with every superlative in the vocabulary of progress. Was that a gain or a loss? Who can compute the social credits and debits, and in what terms? We have recently emerged from an epidemic of sit-down strikes in which workers had forcibly taken possession of factories and plants, despite the due process clause in the Constitution. Workers are human beings. They have wives and children whose stomachs ache when they get hungry and whose bodies freeze when they are unclad and unsheltered. But what about the property rights of the factory owners? What about respect for law and order, the bulwark of American democracy? Without prejudice to your verdict, I simply raise the question—are these instances of social gains or social losses, and, in either case, what is your criterion of judgment?

One of the most critical problems our country faces today is the problem of unemployment. I suppose many of us would agree that it is the crucial question of our time. Nearly every speaker on contemporary economic, political, and social questions who mounts a platform and “views with alarm” points an ominous finger at the twelve million employable unemployed in America. Well, we are not the only country that has been compelled to face that problem. Russia has faced it, Italy has faced it, Germany has faced it, and all three countries boast that they have solved it. But step a little closer to the picture of that solution and examine it more carefully. Count those battalions of forced labor in factories, concentration camps, and war munitions industries. See them speeding up production and pouring the strength and resources of the country into dreadnoughts, tanks, poison gases, ammunition, and the whole apparatus of militarism which is the goal of the totalitarian state. See how trade unions have been destroyed, the labor movement smashed, cultural and intellectual life strait-jacketed, and freedom of speech,

press, and assembly utterly suppressed. Over there they call that progress. Would you call it that?

May I suggest that if we are to avoid confusion in this matter of determining what is gain and what is loss in the social process, it will be necessary for us to define our terms more precisely and set up certain standards of reference.

In the first place, we should clearly understand that there is a distinction between civilization, on the one hand, and culture, on the other. I know that these terms are often used synonymously, but they are not identical. They refer to different aspects of social organization. The reason we are confused in our thinking about them is because they are both employed indiscriminately to register various stages in the development of society. Let us see if we can divorce them from their illegitimate union in order that we may more clearly understand our problem.

My old teacher, Professor Maciver of Columbia University, following the German sociologist Alfred Weber, has indicated an approach to this question which seems to me highly clarifying.

To begin with, civilization refers to things we use, culture to what we are. Machines and gadgets, facilities and creature comforts are part of the apparatus of civilization. In themselves they are not important. Their significance lies in the purposes they serve. If these could be otherwise achieved, we would unhesitatingly discard the technical equipment. This is not the case with the stuff of culture. A painting or statue, a sonnet or symphony is an end in itself. It has validity in its own right.

Technological achievements are in the category of civilization. Here we deal with phenomena where development is observable, continuous and indeed inevitable. Let a man invent a clock or a steam-engine, a telescope or an automobile, and succeeding generations improve endlessly on the original model. The old becomes useless and is discarded.

Not so with the objects of culture. They are part of a quality of living which cannot be transmitted as a simple inheritance from one age to another. To be sure, the present is always rooted in the past, but there is no guarantee that its culture will surpass or even equal that of earlier times. "The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome" is not reached by succeeding generations. What Michaelangelo and Shakespeare produced is still unsurpassed, but the discoveries of Archimedes and Newton are a springboard for Einstein

whose achievements eclipse theirs. The new bridges across the Golden Gate and San Francisco Bay are improvements on every bridge that was built since the dawn of history. Yet in fifty years from now, other bridge builders will improve on them. Our California highways are infinitely superior to any roads built by imperial Rome or all the road builders who ever planned a highway. But what Aristotle, Phidias or Homer produced is not surpassed by later men who have studied their every stroke and sentence.

There is another respect in which culture is not cumulative, as is civilization. In the latter you can assemble individual technological units into large combinations, so that ultimately an entire continent is tied together by steel rails or airways. Out of many small forces you can make one tremendous force. But culture eludes statistics. You can count a nation's population, its houses and factories, airplanes and battleships; you cannot take a census of its morals, customs, piety, sensitivity—in a word, its culture. A million tiny strands of wire will support a suspension bridge. But a million stutterers do not add up to one orator. A million skeptics do not make one religionist, nor a million dunces a philosopher. If you fill yonder Greek Theatre with scraping and mewling violinists, the net result will give you only a terrific headache. It will never add up to a Fritz Kreisler or a Yehudi Menuhin.

If this analysis be valid, it becomes clear, does it not, that any estimate of social progress must concern itself, not only with the means by which men live, but the ends for which they live. There is a world of difference between making a living and making a life. The one can be measured and counted, the other cannot.

One thinks in this connection of a small community that lived centuries ago in the shadow of the Parthenon in Athens. Contrasted with our modern, highly complex civilization, their mode of existence seems crude and primitive. A foot-runner afforded the surest method of communication; a horse, the fastest means of travel. Their homes were simple and comfortless; their manner of living, frugal and austere. And yet in that environment, without any of the skyscrapers and railroad systems and radio and electric and airplane services and all the elaborate means of living which we possess, that little community around the Acropolis produced a culture that has been an inexhaustible inspiration for the Western world. The means by which they lived were scant and simple—Plato and Socrates, Euripides and Sophocles,

Phidias and Aeschylus—but the ends for which they lived have given them a niche in the spiritual history of man which our highly equipped modern communities will probably never even approximate.

I think of another and still older civilization that grew up to the east of Athens in a rugged mountainous country inhabited by a unique and prophetic people. They were shepherds and peasants, nomads and fishermen, schooled in adversity and self-denying to the point of repudiating even the meager facilities for living which their environment afforded. A donkey cart was the most efficient carrier they possessed. Signal fires on the mountain tops provided their means of communication. Their clothing came from the skins of animals or primitive hand looms; their daily fare was rugged and parsimonious. The means by which they lived were crude beyond comprehension—Isaiah and Jeremiah, Amos and Micah, Hosea and Jesus of Nazareth—but the ends for which they lived have transfigured them into the immemorial heroes of the race.

This distinction between civilization and culture, the means versus the ends of living, brings us face to face with the fact that the products of social change must be classified and judged in their separate categories by standards to be agreed upon. The apparatus of civilization, its technological equipment, can be evaluated in terms of efficiency. The fruits of culture must be evaluated in terms of ethical standards.

It is here that the sociologist finds himself disadvantaged by the natural scientist. The physicist or the chemist who deals with the phenomena of the external world is under no compulsion to apply ethical standards in his research. He can be absolutely neutral and objective in his laboratory. Wesley Mitchell recently declared that "science is concerned to show only what is true and what is false, but science itself does not pronounce practical or esthetic or moral judgments." The physicist can determine the composition of a projectile, compute the force necessary to hurl it a certain distance to light with unerring precision upon a stipulated spot. He need not necessarily be concerned about the purposes which that knowledge will serve. Not so the sociologist. To him, the character of that projectile must be a matter of tremendous concern. It may be a high-explosive shell that will snuff out scores of lives, create widows and orphans, destroy homes and human happiness. "The sociologist," says Professor Maciver, "who has no ethical interest, no

interest in social conditions as relative to values, is a dilettante. He is like a grammarian who studies the letters and syllables of words, but never thinks of the words themselves as meanings. It is a possible method, and there is some knowledge to be derived that way—but it is not the knowledge of community.” You can speak of social change, of social development, and of social evolution as much as you please without once referring to ethical values, but when you speak of social progress you are committed by the very vocabulary you employ to an ethical criterion of judgment.

Let us illustrate this. It appears that the overwhelming majority of Americans are vigorously opposed to the totalitarian philosophies of government which exist today in Russia, Germany, and Italy. We hear them constantly criticized as a retreat to the obscurantism of the Dark Ages, as “the upthrust of jungle instincts” which have “set in full retreat the gains which humanity has achieved since the French Revolution.” If we were to analyze the revulsion of the great masses of Americans toward fascist and communist governments, we would undoubtedly discover that it derives from a love of civil liberty, of intellectual freedom, of fair play, all of which are ruthlessly suppressed under dictatorship. And I suspect that there is another, more fundamental reason (unconsciously felt and seldom articulated) why we regard these new ideologies as retrogressive, barbarous, and abhorrent. That reason, I suggest, is that they are irreconcilable with the classic traditions of the religious faith which dominates America.

For it must never be forgotten that democracy is the political formulation of the religious and moral values in our Judaeo-Christian heritage. When the founding fathers of our nation declared that all men are endowed by their Creator with rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that these prerogatives are beyond the power of states or monarchs to alienate or abridge, where did they derive the authority for such an audacious pronouncement? It was predicated on the recognition of a higher law than any temporal power could decree: the law of God. That stipulation is the cardinal political dogma of democracy.

Dictators ridicule this avowal. They assert that there is no power or authority above the state. The party-boss is the only deity permitted. He is omnipotent and infallible. In Italy recently I saw signs reading “Mussolini doesn’t make any mistakes.” Opportunism is the new morality. Abraham Lincoln,

surveying the havoc of the Civil War could exclaim, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." The new dispensation declares, "The judgments of the Fuehrer, the Duce, the Commissar, are true and righteous altogether."

Our democracy stresses the importance of the individual. No matter how lowly his origin or how humble his station, every human being is significant and sacred. All the apparatus of government exists for his welfare. The totalitarian state reverses this order. The individual is of no account save as a cog in a vast military machine; a de-personalized robot in a goose-stepping political system.

Our conception of the ideal society is a warless world: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares." Our exhortation is "not by might" and "the meek shall inherit the earth." In contrast to this, every Italian and German is conscripted from youth to the service of militarism. In Russian kindergartens they teach babies how to wear gas masks and conduct mimic trench warfare. Pacifism is crucified in concentration camps.

It is because these totalitarian theories are so completely at variance with ethical valuations which are fundamental in our thinking that we overwhelmingly deplore that pattern of social change. We denounce it as retrogression and the defeat and the degradation of the human spirit!

If someone now objects to this method of evaluating social progress on the grounds that it is subjective, I agree. Every ethical judgment is a subjective judgment. To the tribes of Borneo progress would mean success in head-hunting. That is a subjective judgment. The Eskimo might deny that our civilized life is better than his. Where is the common ground on which we can meet for a decision? If our life better satisfies our ideals, so does his life his. Who, then, is the arbiter of ideals?

May I suggest a standard of reference? There are certain things in the social history of mankind which seem to be enduring and unchangeable, just as in nature there are certain phenomena which are from everlasting to everlasting. Mankind is immeasurably old, but the spirit of youth is no less ardent today; nature is immeasurably older, but her blossoms are as fragrant and fair today as they were at creation's dawn. Just so there are qualities of personal character which were precious in the sight of men five thousand years ago, and will hold their identical worth among men ten thousand years hence:

integrity, loyalty, courage, patience, the love of freedom, and the pursuit of social justice. These are values which the human race as a whole has cherished since time immemorial. The history of political institutions would appear to indicate that the environment most favorable to their development is the environment of democracy.

As you take leave of these tranquil surroundings and embark upon the uncertain currents of the world that lies before you, I urge you to accept these values and nail them to your mast. The ultimate and certain test of the worth of your education will be the way in which these values are reflected in your character and conduct. The times call for a rededication to that American dream which James Truslow Adams has described as: "a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement." And lest that dream be cavalierly tossed aside as too nebulous and vague to serve as a practical yardstick for measuring the gains and losses in our changing American scene, we can hasten to implement it with concrete specifications: more equal distribution of wealth, employment opportunity for men and women able and willing to work, decent living standards, economic and social security, the abolition of slums; sanitation and decent housing, collective bargaining, shorter hours, wages adequate to provide decent living standards and the opportunity for self-development for every man, woman, and child in the land. These are values which are sound and attainable in a democracy of our wealth and intelligence. Where Stalin and Hitler and Mussolini cannot but fail, America, God willing, shall yet prevail.

There are certain words in the technical vocabulary of every academic discipline which tend to become stereotypes and clichés. Psychologists have a word which probably recurs in the literature of modern psychology more frequently than any other. That word is "maladjusted." It is the battle-cry of the new child psychology. Well, there are some things in our social system to which I am proud to be maladjusted and to which I suggest that you, too, ought to be maladjusted. I do not propose to adjust myself to the inequalities of our economic order. I do not want to become adjusted to the insanity of international war and the madness of militarism. I refuse to adjust myself to the bigotry and bitterness of race prejudice, to the brutalities of vigilantes, to the preventable suffering of the disinherited, to the plight of men and

women driven desperate by want. I consider it the deepest obligation of every enlightened American to be maladjusted to these things.

In the record of a conversation attributed to Confucius we are told that the great wise man of the East was asked what are the three greatest needs of the state. He answered: "First, food for the people; second, defense of its borders; and third, confidence in its rulers." "And if one must be sacrificed, which should it be?" he was asked. "The defense," said Confucius. "And if another must go, which shall it be?" the questioner continued. "Food," said Confucius, "for if the people have not confidence in their leaders, no government is possible."

It is from among you that leadership in American life for your generation should naturally come. If you abdicate the prerogatives which scholarship and trained intelligence inevitably confer, you incur grave risk that the direction of affairs will go by default to men of low aims and even lower principles. But if you are to deserve the confidence of your country in the leadership you offer, you will have to keep faith with the deathless hopes and dreams of the builders of our American democracy.

This, then, is the conclusion of the matter. You are going out into a world that is essentially changeful. The only reliable gauge that you will have to determine the direction of social change is the method of ethical evaluation. Certain it is that our technological wizardry has equipped us to achieve those ideal goals which constitute the American dream. If we dedicate our abundance and our power to that end, we shall surely advance the welfare of humanity. If we fail to do so, we shall just as surely destroy ourselves with the instruments of our own efficiency.

It is my abiding conviction that communism and fascism can teach us nothing except the tragic folly of exchanging social security for a spurious economic security. Only within the framework of democracy can we achieve our American ideals. If we, as a nation, can muster the will, the intelligence, and the faith to adhere to that conception of our national destiny, our social change must inevitably mean social progress.

THE CONTAGION OF A SPIRITUAL PESTILENCE¹

FROM the window of my study I can look directly down upon that lovely stretch of San Francisco Bay just inside the Golden Gate and the bridge that couldn't be built which spans it, where the incoming ships drop anchor for compulsory health inspection. Neither storm nor night nor diplomatic ingenuity, nor all the pressures and persuasions of political intrigue, can circumvent the long and sanitary arm of Uncle Sam from holding at its straining anchor every overseas vessel that enters this port. Before those impatient ships are permitted to complete the last long mile to their piers, they must first satisfy the meticulously vigilant authorities that they are not carrying contagious or infectious diseases to these shores. It would not do to wait until the boat had docked and the passengers disembarked. Past experience has taught us that a single carrier can depopulate a community as swiftly as a single match can devastate a mountain side. Let a pestilence once get started and it laughs at boundary lines and barriers, at class distinctions and social categories. A virulent germ has no more regard for a millionaire than for a pauper. It accepts the cultivated hospitality of the palace quite as comfortably as the cruder shelter of the slum. A germ is the most democratic form of life: it doesn't know the meaning of snobbishness. And we insist that those ships drop anchor in mid-channel for inspection because we don't want our country ravaged by pestilence and plague.

Sometimes as I have watched that yellow flag hoisted and the little government launch put out, an intriguing thought has run through my mind. What a wonderful thing it would be if we could quarantine our country as effectively against the contagion of a spiritual pestilence as we do against the contagion of disease. If only we knew how to be just as careful and critical about the ideas we allow to propagate as we are about the germs, what a united and contented commonwealth we could achieve! We still have a great deal to learn about sickness and health, it is true, but thanks to the Pasteurs and Kochs, we know at least enough about bubonic plague to recognize its frightful potentialities, and to realize that once it breaks loose in a community, no household is safe. Well, it is an old saying that ideas are the strongest and most powerful things in the world, yet just see what a sorry mess we are

¹ Delivered April 27, 1940, "Message of Israel" program, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

making of this earth because we don't know enough about them to tell the good ones from the bad. We lack the discriminating and educated fear for bad ideas that we have for bad germs. We don't take seriously enough the menace of spiritual contamination, but let a destructive idea get loose in a community and thrive on hatred, discontent and avarice, and you have on your hands a situation far more menacing than any which ever confronted a bacteriologist. No one is immune from its malevolent consequences—it matters not whether you are on the relief rolls or the Social Register.

If you want a biblical text for this observation, you can find it in the Book of Esther. "Think not within thy heart that thou shalt escape in the king's house more than all the Jews." That was the message which Mordecai sent to his niece Esther, queen of Persia. A vicious idea had broken loose in the kingdom, and was infecting the people with its deadly poison. To serve his own dark purposes, the chancellor of the realm was fomenting racial and religious hatred against the Jews, and had fixed the day for their annihilation. Now Esther was the first woman of the land. She was the favorite consort of the king. You may be certain that she was not lacking in power, prestige, money, social position, and influential friends. If anyone in such a situation might have reason to feel that regardless of the fate that would overtake the poorer and the humbler and the weaker members of his groups, he would weather the storm, that person was Esther. But Mordecai knew better. He had thought this thing through. He realized that when a destructive idea has become a popular delusion no one is immune from danger. Wealth, position, influence may postpone the calamity for a time; they cannot avert it altogether, "Think not within thy heart that thou shalt escape in the king's house more than all the Jews."

Let no one imagine that this wise warning of an ancient day exhausted its significance when that Persian crisis was past. One of the reasons why the Bible has endured as a classic guide for civilized living is that its wisdom is universal and timeless. Those words of Mordecai are as true and as modern as though they had been lifted literally from the latest text-book on social psychology.

We inhabit a world in which no man liveth or dieth unto himself alone. Each one of us is a thread in a social fabric woven on the loom of a common interest and a common destiny. You cannot mutilate any portion of that pat-

tern without doing injury to the entire design. Science has transformed every modern nation on earth into an intimate neighborhood, in which the harm done by an anti-social force is not restricted to any one locality or any portion of the population.

Consider for example, the incalculable harm that religious bigotry has done the human family. As has so often happened, you begin by inflaming the prejudices and passions of people against one minority group. You circulate the most incredible and fantastic fabrications about them; you hold them responsible for every community problem you have failed to solve, and you raise a hue and cry for their suppression. Do you think that the fury you have unleashed will have run its course when the immediate objects of your persecution have been ruined? That stream of hatred will overflow the narrow channel in which you would confine it, and spread its havoc far and wide. Today it is the Jews who are the victims; yesterday it was the Catholics; the day before it was the Quakers, Puritans and Huguenots, and tomorrow the cycle may begin anew. Intolerance is a spiritual pestilence whose virus does not select its victims with discrimination or consistency.

Before Colonel Goethals could build the Panama Canal he had a job of sanitation on his hands. The entire region was infested with yellow fever, and his first task was to clean that up. Do you think that he was concerned only about the health of his engineering staff? Do you suppose that he was indifferent to the sickness of the Indians and common laborers? He fought yellow fever wherever he found it, whether among ranking officers or buck privates, illiterate coolies or university technicians. To build that canal he had to conquer yellow fever, and if we are to build our nation into a democratic commonwealth that will be firm and enduring, our first job is to eradicate that spiritual pestilence of religious intolerance wherever it exists.

Certainly thoughtful people in all religious denominations are aware of this. If the ethics of Judaism are to be considered obsolete, what becomes of Christian ethics? If non-Aryan races are to be considered inferior what becomes of Jesus and the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man? If the Old Testament is to be repudiated, what happens to the entire structure of Christianity? It cannot stand.

And just as Catholic and Protestant and Jew share a mutual interest in a classic religious tradition that is their common heritage, so are Catholics and

Protestants and Jews interdependent upon one another as human beings and citizens in a common interest in the welfare of America. So are Negroes, Mexicans, Filipinos, Japanese—all the elements of our national life—dependent one upon the other in this closely interwoven and highly integrated social structure which is the pattern of modern civilization. The lot of the greatest is inextricably bound up with the lot of the least, and when a social pestilence rages, you may be sure that there is no effective quarantine against it.

Let me leave you with one final thought: The message of Mordecai to Esther did not stop with the injunction that enlightened self-interest should dictate her behaviour. He went on to say that even if she remained silent, relief and deliverance to the Jews would come from another source but that she and her father's house would surely perish. He said to Esther, in short, "A timely word is needed. You are the person to speak it. If you don't, you will surely perish but the Jewish people will go on. Deliverance and relief will come from another place."

Now there are a great many people in our day who are constantly criticizing the churches and the synagogues for dealing with social and economic problems. There are those who would try to persuade us that the preacher should only discuss the eternal verities in terms of pious, soothing platitudes. Certainly religion should and does say a great many comforting things about God's mercy and goodness and loving-kindness. Religion should and does bring solace to the broken in spirit, relief to the burdened, comfort to the heavy laden, and cheer to the faint of heart. But I submit that religion should not and cannot stop there. That is only one aspect of religion and the duty of the preacher. A religion worthy of free men in a free society must deal realistically with the fact that man's spiritual welfare is enormously affected by his physical and social environment. Religion is not a business but it is the business of religion to crusade fearlessly and uncompromisingly against every economic, political, industrial, civic and social evil that degrades the divinity in man and diminishes his stature as a child of God. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a horn, and declare unto My people their transgressions, and to the house of Jacob their sins." Religion has a stake in the social situation and if the pulpit is silent on crucial issues we may depend upon it that relief and deliverance will come to society from another source but the institutions of organized religion will be discredited—they will per-

ish. Indeed, one reason why there is such a conspicuous absence in our modern synagogues and churches of working men and women, is that the workers of the world have ample reason to feel that organized religion has not championed their battle when a word in due season was needed—when it was timely to speak the courageous message. Religion today must speak that word. Its duty does not end with delivering pleasant assurances to those who are in need of spiritual assistance. That is part of its mission, but not all.

Our world today is deathly sick. It is incumbent upon men of good-will everywhere, if only on the basis of enlightened self-interest, to stamp out the spiritual pestilences that rage in our society. Religion should take the leadership, should point the way and should hold up as a goal the thought expressed so beautifully by the Psalmist when he said: "Because thou hast made the Lord thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

THE DUTY OF HATING¹

TO most people it would seem incongruous if not altogether incredible that a teacher of religion and ethics could seriously argue the virtues of hatred. Indeed, a study of the ethical systems of the great religions of mankind would fortify the popular impression that, far from being praised as a virtue, hatred has generally been condemned as one of the ugliest and most deplorable sins of the human spirit. Certainly the grim record that history unfolds of man's inhumanity to man, replete with bloody tales of war and savagery, of lust and cruelty, and all the lurid horror that man alone of all earth's creatures can devise; certainly that record would appear to establish so incontrovertibly the iniquity of hatred that not even the devil's advocate would be so bold as to venture its defense.

And yet that is precisely what I propose in all honesty to attempt this morning. For although I would not alter a single syllable of the devastating indictment that can properly be drawn up against hatred in its vicious manifestations, like every other aspect of human nature, it has its higher and finer uses which make it a powerful factor for human progress and the welfare of the individual. The prophet Amos, for example, affords an excellent illustration of the manner in which hatred can be finely used as an instrument of social righteousness. In that memorable denunciation of the iniquities of his generation in which he laid bare with magnificent audacity their individual and collective transgressions, he offered them this formula of conduct. "Hate the evil and love the good." Amos, like every other Hebrew prophet, has often been derided as an impractical visionary, a romantic theorist and an utopian dreamer. But you can be certain that he was facing the evils of his day realistically when he delivered that address. He told them that their commonwealth was headed for destruction, ridden as it was with graft and corruption, the exploitation of the poor and the oppression of the weak, the rapacity of the rich and the ruthlessness of the powerful. He knew that the only thing that could avert the impending doom was a thoroughgoing regeneration. And he knew too that the only way in which that could be effected would be by arousing the great masses of the people to such fierce hatred of the prevailing evils that they would rise in their wrath and destroy them

¹Delivered May 1, 1937, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

utterly. The prophet who could speak so eloquently of love, of God's impartial love for all mankind—"Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto Me, O children of Israel?"—the prophet who could say that could also praise the virtues of hatred when finely used. "Hate the evil!"

Indeed it might be demonstrated that almost without exception in every great advance that man has made, hatred has played a significant part. Somewhere, someone with a deep-seated aversion to a prevailing stupidity or intolerable wrong has hurled the full force of his resentment against it with irresistible fury. For centuries men worshipped God with the sacrifice of their first-born children. The Bible contains the record of that practice, and it also preserves the account of Abraham's revolt against it. Of one thing we may be certain: the custom was not so easily abandoned as might appear from the Genesis legend which tells of the test to which Abraham's piety was put. In the story Abraham is prevented by God at the very last moment from slaying his son. Now we know that social advances simply don't happen that way. What really must have occurred was that Abraham saw the barbarity of that custom; the more he considered it, the more he loathed it, until his mounting revulsion culminated in a crusade against infanticide which ultimately led to its rejection as a religious rite. He harnessed his hatred to an ideal!

And how do you suppose Moses was able to achieve the liberation of the Hebrew slaves? It is not blasphemous to reject the naiveté of the Exodus story; the details are overshadowed by the event itself. In the sensitive soul of that ancient liberator there must have burned the flame of indignation against the institution of slavery, a flame that, fed by the tyranny of Pharoah and the cruelty of his taskmasters, waxed greater and greater until finally it burst in revolt and won freedom for a people. Moses knew the finer uses of hatred. He harnessed his hatred to an ideal!

This thought carries us over into other fields of human achievement and social progress. Freud goes wrong when he attempts to reduce all behavior to the principle of sex. Human conduct cannot be so simply explained on the basis of a single motivation or drive. By the same token it would not be fair to say that hatred is the sole motivating force behind human achievement, but certainly man's aversion to ignorance can account for a great deal that is worthwhile in our civilization. Men hated to be kept in ignorance of the

world. They simply could not abide the intellectual discomfort, not to speak of the physical insecurity, of living in a world too mysterious for safety. So Magellan pushed his way around the globe and Columbus pointed his caravel toward the setting sun. Pasteur was fiercely intolerant of the ignorance of his day which was impotent before the scourges of anthrax and cholera, the ravages of rabies and hydrophobia. He set himself to fight those evils with such uncompromising concentration that Huxley could say of him that the savings in money alone to France during Pasteur's lifetime, as a result of his discoveries, were greater than the indemnity paid by France to Germany after the War of 1870. And that represented the least of his benefactions to humanity. Pasteur hated evil and he harnessed his hatred to an ideal!

The simple truth of the matter is that you cannot love humanity without hating the things that destroy it. You cannot love justice without a deep-seated resentment against injustice. That was more than a pious phrase that the Psalmist uttered when he said, "They that love the Lord hate evil." That is an inescapable fact of human nature: when you become an advocate of an ideal, whatever it may be, you simply cannot remain neutral about the things that oppose it.

Up to 1841 the treatment of the insane poor was a disgrace to the United States. The story of their persecution is a tale of inconceivable cruelty. No one seemed to care to what indignities they were subjected until the soul of one noble woman revolted. Dorothea Dix, one of the most self-effacing, sacrificial and competent women America has produced, hated the persecution of the insane poor so much that she dedicated her life to their improvement. In eight years she travelled more than sixty thousand miles, pleaded their cause before the legislatures of nearly every state in the Union, established scores of insane asylums and houses of refuge for the mentally afflicted, and ultimately extended her work to nearly every European country and Japan. She loved the good, to be sure, but it was her hatred of evil that set in full retreat the cruelties of centuries.

Some years ago there grew up in the foul slums of London a young man who revolted against the sordid and brutal environment of that mephitic atmosphere. Before William Booth reached maturity, he had developed an irreconcilable hostility to the things that degraded the personalities of the underprivileged: crushing poverty, illiteracy, miserable housing, drunkenness, moral

depravity, and all the other evils that left their permanent scars upon the souls of men and women. And out of the noble rage of that great spirit there emerged the Salvation Army, whose ministrations have brought opportunity and blessing to countless millions who grope in the shadow of want and insecurity.

This year the literary world is celebrating the 125th anniversary of an author described in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as "the most popular and perhaps the greatest of all English novelists." Like William Booth, Charles Dickens grew up in London in a poor and sordid environment. As a boy he saw his father thrown into prison for debt. His childhood was made bitter by want and necessity. With the passing years he cultivated an angry dislike of the evils that bore down so crushingly upon the poor; and when he reached maturity he immortalized that hatred in a literature that revolutionized the social structure of England. That hatred of Charles Dickens was a creative hatred. It blazed a path for legislative reforms, for the elimination of cruelty in the schools of England, for the abolition of imprisonment for debt and for a score of enduring benefactions.

One might go on endlessly to demonstrate that every victory achieved by man over the things that shackle his progress has drawn its inspiration from intrepid spirits aflame with righteous indignation. God simply will not have this world redeemed by indifference! Our Jewish sages say that man is a co-worker with the Almighty in bringing about His Kingdom on earth. Well, that heroic task demands heroic measures. The Everlasting Arms hurl thunderbolts when Pharaoh's heart is hardened!

Throughout America this day more than three thousand May Day parties are being held to emphasize the importance of one of our country's greatest natural resources. You will not read about it in the financial section of your daily paper, for it has nothing to do with coal or iron or oil or water power. It is a much more precious commodity than all of these. This is Child Health Day in America, instituted to remind us that every child in our democracy ought to have a decent chance to grow up strong and well. And indeed, we have made progress in this direction during the thirteen years since this day was designated as an annual observance. In 1924, out of every thousand babies born in American cities, seventy-one did not live through the first year; that mortality rate has dropped to fifty-six. In 1920, deaths from diphtheria were

more than fifteen for every hundred thousand; less than one-third that number now die from that disease. That is progress! An aroused public conscience is responsible in a great measure for it. But we have only just begun to fight this war against the enemies of childhood. Throughout the length and breadth of our great nation, whose power and wealth and glory we celebrate in unrestrained superlatives, there are thousands of children with correctible defects which we suffer to go unremedied: children with defective vision who squint hopelessly at blurred blackboards and fail in their studies for lack of glasses; children with defective hearing, shunned by playmates whose games they might be sharing. Malnutrition and tuberculosis take their annual toll of thousands of young lives, victims of the neglect and indifference of an apathetic public. There are states in America that vigorously insist on an official examination every six months of every automobile on their highways. If there is anything wrong with that car, it stays in the repair shop until the defect is remedied. One would think that an enlightened people would be at least as much concerned about its children as about its automobiles. Well, we can do something about this situation if we care enough for our children to get indignant about it, and harness that indignation to an adequate public health program.

Or consider another and more lurid stain that damns our society with its foulness. Some days ago in Mississippi a mob took two prisoners from the custody of officers, and burned them slowly to death with blow-torches. I would wager my chances for salvation that the brave patriots who perpetrated that savagery in Mississippi are among the most violent denouncers of atheistic Russia. No Communist in America is a more dangerous enemy of liberty than the criminals who led that mob. And the *Christian Century*, commenting sadly on the event, observes: "Hideous as was that crime, no one expects more than a formal investigation." What a tragic commentary on the inequality of our democracy! During the last fifty years there have been nearly four thousand lynchings in America, and how many convictions do you suppose have been returned? In only twelve cases were the murderers brought to justice, and even in these the sentences were nominal and many were commuted!

To be sure, any thoughtful man can appreciate and sympathize with the difficult social problem that confronts the South. The congressman from

Mississippi, in the debate in Congress the other day on the Gavagan Lynching Bill, was right at least in this, that the Negro problem grew out of slavery which was brought to these shores in Yankee ships. Nor is this problem sectional; we in the North have seen mutilated bodies dangling from trees in the moonlight. But this much is certain: we cannot have our liberty and lynchings, too. In these critical days when we guard with jealous vigilance our Constitutional rights, let us remember that in that precious document there is also a momentous clause safeguarding the sanctity of life and liberty by due process of law. How much liberty do we want? Do we want it only for white men and not for others? How much justice do we want? Do we want it only for people of wealth and power, or for the humble and friendless, too? You may depend upon it that this is a situation in which only an angry social conscience will get results.

As I wrote this address the other day in my study overlooking the Golden Gate and the Marin hills beyond, my eyes looked up from my desk across the lovely panorama framed in my window, until they rested on Alcatraz Island planted stolidly in the very heart of the picture before me. Behind the grim walls of that impressive bastille, America's notorious criminals count the leaden hours of their captivity. What untamed impulse, what rebellious passion brought them there? Surely hatred played its part. Some of them hated the wrong things, they hated work and they scorned its unsensational but honest recompense. Some of them hated the right things; they hated poverty or unemployment or a brutal environment or the treachery of trusted friends or the lack of decent opportunity for their children; but they hated them in the wrong way. So instead of turning their rage into a useful instrument for building a fine and worthy career or demolishing the barriers that shut them out from a fuller and a richer life, they became the enemies of society instead of its allies in the struggle for a better day. Everyone knows that Abraham Lincoln was one of the gentlest and most lovable of men, but I am sure that he carried as much hatred in his heart as the most embittered prisoner on Alcatraz today. He hated slavery so much that as a youth, seeing the auction-block in New Orleans, he exclaimed: "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing, I'm going to hit it and hit it hard;" and in his later years that passion was still so great in his expansive soul that he could bitterly look out upon his country drenched in fratricidal blood, and say, "Yet if God wills that it continue . . .

until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be requited by another drawn with the sword—as was said three thousand years ago, so still must it be said ‘The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’ ” Lincoln hated the right things, and he hated them in the right way!

And so I conclude as I began. Hatred is one of the most vicious traits of the human spirit when it is destructively used. But harnessed to high motives and fine purposes, hurled against unrighteousness and evil, it can become an irresistible force for good.

THE FOOL HATH SAID IN HIS HEART¹

SIR FRANCIS BACON in his essay on atheism makes an interesting comment on the first verse of the fourteenth Psalm: "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.' " He calls attention to the fact that the Psalmist does not say, "The fool hath thought in his heart," but that he deliberately employs the unusual phrase, "The fool hath said in his heart," to indicate that he has to repeat it to himself by rote to overcome his natural piety and persuade himself that he is an atheist.

Now Sir Francis Bacon was not a particularly competent biblical exegete, and yet there is something in his observation on this verse which commends it to our thoughtful consideration in the present state of world affairs. I think that our atheists had better repeat over and over again to themselves the formulas of their heresy if they would hold on to their atheism in the face of what is happening in the world today. For if the concept of God means anything at all it means that there is a divine plan at work in the universe. However religions may disagree regarding articles of faith and conventions of worship, they do agree in their conception of a Supreme Being, Who reveals Himself in the orderliness of the cosmos. See what happens in a world in which man's ignorance and wilfulness is pitted against the mysterious forces of his environment—the crumbling of his elaborate civilization, his helplessness against his own dexterity, oppressive poverty in the midst of plenty, the collapse of industry and the demoralization of commerce, unemployment and war. Let the atheist contrast this unprepossessing picture with the harmony and order that prevail in the universe. Let him reflect upon the ceaseless and uninterrupted operation of those laws which keep our cosmos going, which insure the marvelously precise recurrence of the planets and seasons in their appointed times and places. Yes, Bacon was right! Our atheists had better repeat their creeds by rote to sustain their impotent impiety.

When the author of the fourteenth Psalm wrote those immortal words, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God,' " he was complaining bitterly against the enemies of Israel who were maltreating their Hebrew captives with unconscionable cruelty. Such inhuman conduct was only explicable to the Psalmist on the grounds that the oppressors were without fear of reprisals from a just God Who would avenge the sufferings of the captives.

¹Delivered May, 1936, Stanford University Memorial Church and coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting System.

"They eat up my people as they eat bread," is his lament. "They deal corruptly. They have acted abominably. There is none that doeth good." If there were a God of justice, as religionists maintain, then certainly he would not permit such iniquity to go unrebuked. Therefore, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

How modern is the sound of this ancient complaint! The Psalmist may not have lived to witness the retribution, swift and terrible, that was visited upon the persecutors of Israel, but surely, we can clearly see in the modern whirlwind that society is reaping, the fruit of the wind of wickedness that we have sown these many generations. There are some who attribute the present world difficulties to the madness of the Great War. Others refer to charts and statistics to prove that our troubles have sprung from the deification of the machine. Still others speak vaguely and even hysterically of the confusion caused by financial manipulators and the debasement of the currency. Behind these dominant voices like a Greek chorus, there arises the cacophony of a thousand minor prophets each with his own special interpretation of humanity's misfortunes, each reciting a jeremiad of lament phrased in the vocabulary of materialism. Only faintly, like a still, small voice from the distant past, can be heard the steady insistence of the spiritually sensitive, interpreting the babel of voices with the penetrating but unwelcome truth that all our misfortunes have come upon us because we have placed material possessions at the center of our lives and crowded into the periphery the most significant thing in all the world, human personality. Upon what have we founded our modern society? Upon the blood of women and children toiling in factories and sweat shops, upon the joyless and darkened lives of wage-slaves entombed in our mines and imprisoned in our mills, upon the human refuse of our broken and discarded hewers of wood and drawers of water, upon the decaying flesh of our millions slain on the battlefield—are not these the pillars of the social structure that is tottering and affrighted? An ancient Midrash says that God came not unto Adam until the evening, but He came. God did not come to Sodom and Gomorrah until evening, but He came. Destruction did not overtake the Hebrew commonwealth until it had passed the zenith of its glory, but it came. And shall we, beholding the predicament of modern society, still ask for evidences of retributive justice?

Verily, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

II

Disbelief in God is not nearly as widespread as it might appear to be. Nearly all atheism on analysis turns out to be confused thinking. Most people who deny the existence of God are really denying nothing more than certain ideas or opinions about God. It is significant that the early Greek schools of philosophy which have been most accused of atheism, the schools of Leucippus and Democritus and Epicurus, are saturated with religious ideas thoroughly acceptable to modern liberals. Auguste Comte, the founder of modern sociology, outlined a system of positive religion that banished God, the soul, and immortality, and then proceeded to refute his own principles by prescribing for his disciples two hours of daily prayer. It is related of Voltaire that one day in Paris a religious procession carrying a crucifix passed by the great French iconoclast and a friend. Voltaire, who, as you know, was generally regarded as an infidel, lifted his hat. "What!" the friend exclaimed. "Are you reconciled with God?" And Voltaire replied with fine irony, "We salute but we do not speak." That phrase, uttered by a man who has come to be looked upon as one of the world's outstanding infidels, reveals the attitude of many men toward God. Like Voltaire, their so-called atheism is not necessarily a disbelief in a Supreme Power. It is merely a repudiation of certain traditional beliefs and opinions and theological dogmas about God.

What most of our atheists mean when they say they do not believe in God, is that they do not believe in the God that has been embalmed in the creeds of orthodox religions, or described to them in childhood by pious but ignorant teachers and friends. Certainly the God conception held by a majority of the earth's population would make practically everyone listening in this afternoon an atheist. If you describe God to me in terms employed by Old Testament writers three thousand years ago, as a God who walked in the garden in the cool of the day, who delighted in the sweet savor of burnt-offerings, who came down to look at a huge tower that had incurred his displeasure, who had to be placated by human sacrifices of little children, who ordered the ruthless slaughter of the captives of war, who selected one group of people as his favorites and handed their leader a set of laws engraved upon stone; if you expect me to believe in that kind of God, then I, too, must confess my atheism, and I fancy that I will have many of you for company. It was revolt against that type of God-idea that earned for such deeply religious spirits as

Spinoza and Lincoln, to mention two out of a distinguished roster, the epithet of unbeliever. A man is not an atheist when he refuses to believe that the walls of Jericho were demolished by God at the blast of a trumpet. It is an enviable form of heresy to repudiate a Santa Claus conception of God which pictures him as a benevolent patriarch dispensing pretty knickknacks to his favored pets.

You see, what I am driving at is that atheism can only be understood with reference to the God-idea that is denied. Viewed from this angle, how quickly the ranks of the atheists dwindle and fall away. Leap the pages of biblical narrative from Deborah and Gideon to Isaiah and Amos where God emerges as the symbol of ethical idealism, and you come out upon a lofty plateau of religious belief upon which every short-legged atheist can stand and catch glimpses of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Verily, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

III

But if some of you find what I have said thus far rather unconvincing, suppose we turn for a moment to contemplate the alternative position to that which the religionist assumes. Suppose you deny the reality of any such supernatural power as religion posits. What are the inevitable consequences of such denial for a thinking man?

The only alternative to a world that is designed and controlled by a guiding intelligence is a world in which these factors are lacking. In that event, the logic of your position forces you to the statement that all life and existence is an utterly fortuitous affair. This universe with its myriads of planets meticulously adhering to their individual orbits find their paths as carelessly as a fistful of carnival confetti tossed into the wind. You must say that at one stage in the planet's cooling, the heat happened to be just right, and from that lucky chemical incident, life emerged. Out of life by sheer accident, came personality. Out of personality proceeded the world of values which we know as art, music, literature, knowledge, love and religion. Behind everything spiritually valuable, from mother-love to the formula of relativity, from Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata to the character of Father Damien, the original primary causative factor, according to the atheist, is simply the fact that once, while the planet cooled, the temperature accidentally happened to be just

right. I say that to believe that is far more credulous than to believe in magic, and that the chance of its being true, as Professor Montague of Columbia says, "would be represented by a fraction with the numerator one and a denominator that would reach from here to one of the fixed stars." I maintain that the most naive worshippers of magic never got any further away than that from intelligent dealing with the laws of causation. Listen to Francis Bacon again: "I had rather believe all the fables in the legend and the Talmud and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind." Hear Heber Curtis, one of America's outstanding astronomers: "We are sitting in at a very remarkable show. We certainly are not putting this show on ourselves. As a scientist, I demand some sort of a theory. My cosmos must be orderly. For me the postulation of an omnipotent God is necessary. It probably is correct." Consider the testimony of Sir Oliver Lodge: "Atheism is so absurd that I do not know how to put it into words." Or take Einstein, who certainly should be modern and scientific enough for even a college student. "I do not know," said Einstein, at work on his relativity theory, "I do not know whether this theory is God's plan, but I am working at it as though it were."

To be sure, it may be objected that the opinions of great scientists on this subject fall far short of convincing evidence. Nevertheless, it would appear to most reasonable men that our atheists had better be cautious in pitting their dogmatic cocksureness against the experience of the race and the wisdom of its greatest intellects. In the realm of the unknowable in science as well as in religion, the wisest men walk humbly and by faith.

Verily, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

Those who are constantly contrasting the certainties of science with the beliefs of religion, to the disadvantage of the latter, ought to be reminded that the so-called truths of science are only attained by faith based on reason. Admitted that the existence of God cannot be mathematically demonstrated, but admit also that the laws of mathematics are no less impossible of rigid proof. Bertrand Russell, one of the world's outstanding mathematicians, has this witty observation to offer on his specialty: "Mathematics may be defined as the subject in which we never know what we are talking about, nor whether what we are saying is true." It is a fact, known to students of logic, that serious difficulties have been found in the "proof" that two plus two equals

four. We may *verify* this as often as we choose, say certain mathematical philosophers, but this is not a *demonstration*. And Sir James Jeans sums up the position of modern science very comprehensively in this wise: "The ultimate realities of the universe," he states, "are at present quite beyond the reach of science, and may be, and probably are, forever beyond the comprehension of the human mind."

Beyond the comprehension of the human mind, perhaps, but not beyond the aspiration of the human spirit. Indeed, there has never yet been advanced a satisfactory definition of God. To define God, said one Jewish philosopher, is to limit Him, and when the greatest of our teachers was asked to describe the nature of the Deity, he simply replied, "I am that I am." The French proverb puts it with equal succinctness: to define God is to nullify Him. The best thinkers and poets have wisely refrained from attempting to describe God with precise exactitude; they have said that God was like something—like a high tower, a strong fortress, a sure refuge, a dwelling-place of righteousness, a just and upright ruler. And we can almost hear them saying: "If this be vagueness, make the most of it." God is a quest, a vision and a goal. He who travels the path of molecules and electrons, of protons and atoms toward a vision of the ultimate may miss it entirely; he who travels the road of spiritual values, of goodness, beauty, truth and love, will surely find Him on the way.

Once a woman remarked to the great artist Turner, "I never saw such sunsets as you paint!" Turner quietly replied, "Madam, don't you wish you could!"

And to him of little faith the man of firm belief can only wish that the courage and consolations of religion might be granted, to smooth the troubled discontent and pitiful loneliness of the man who hath said in his heart, "There is no God!"

A FAITH TO LIVE BY¹

THIS holy day, which we celebrate tonight in a war-torn world, is one of the eternal links which bind our ancient people to its storied past and deathless future. As American Jews living in the twentieth century, its significance for us is negligible chronologically, but paramount theologically. To us, as to our fathers, it is a religious New Year, a new year of the spirit. Certainly none of us tomorrow will date his correspondence "Tishri 1, 5704." Not even the most devout Jew would suggest such an eccentric anachronism. By the same token, only the most apologetic Jew would quibble over the propriety of retaining the New Year in our religious calendar. All divisions of time are arbitrary and artificial. We speak of war-time and standard-time, mountain-time and eastern-time. We have even agreed upon an imaginary international date-line, across which we can escape from today into yesterday or tomorrow, without growing a day older or younger or wiser. None of our time distinctions is real.

Emerson said that the soul has its own festivals. "There is a difference," he wrote, "between one and another hour of life, in their authority and subsequent effect. Our faith comes in moments, our vice is habitual. Yet there is a depth in those brief moments . . ."

For centuries Rosh Hashonah has afforded the observant Jew an interlude from the pressure and harassment of life for such moments of faith. It is an island of contemplation in the turbulent sea of living. It offers sanctuary from the heat of battle, and a plateau of detachment from which to contemplate all the facts of life against the background of eternal values. This New Year's Day brings us face to face with ultimate questions and fundamental realities in a way that we seldom experience.

It seems to me that it was in such a mood as this day inspires that the author of the thirty-first Psalm wrote that immortal poem. Like us, he, too, lived in a turbulent and perilous time. The armies of Persia had over-run Palestine and were battering away at the walls of Jerusalem. Those were dark days for Jewish patriots, days of national crisis and personal unhappiness. The war had stretched its lethal fingers into every home in the land. Famine and pestilence walked side by side with violence and bereavement in the narrow streets of the Judean capital. Yet out of that dark, unhappy, hopeless situa-

¹Delivered September 29, 1943, on Rosh Hashonah Eve.

tion came one of the most glowing affirmations of faith that has ever been uttered by human lips, one of the most sustaining convictions that has ever nourished the human spirit:

*"Thou art my God.
My times are in Thy hand!"*

There speaks the authentic voice of true religious faith! There are the perfect words to the mystic tones that vibrate in the souls of men who have measured their ultimate powers against the inscrutable decisions of Heaven. So spoke Abraham when he repudiated the pagan worship of Babylon and embraced the insecurity of the desert; so spoke Moses in the court of Pharaoh when he ventured his life for his people's freedom. They were the words of Socrates as he raised the hemlock to his lips, and the meditations of Lincoln as he grasped the helm of the Union. Who can number the myriad legions of the nameless and humble in every age who have faced peril and uncertainty with that transfiguring conviction in their hearts:

*"Thou art my God.
My times are in thy hand!"*

In Israel this verse was more than a quotation from an ancient manuscript, or the religious philosophy of an occasional pietist. It became the personal avowal of every individual in the whole Jewish community. To be sure, not every Jew could attain to the highest pinnacles of faith. Neither are all the stars at an equal height from the earth. But the degree and the universality of religious conviction achieved by the Jewish community was remarkably high, and that is an amazing social and historical phenomenon. It is our only unrivaled and recognized claim to uniqueness.

I say it is an amazing circumstance that Israel proclaimed God the guardian of its destiny, because Israel's destiny was written in blood and tears and martyrdom. A comfortable and happy race of men might be expected to explain their preferment through their intimacy with God. For a tortured and driven people to proclaim, "Thou art my God; My times are in Thy hand," is an astonishing and unparalleled historic paradox. It explains the otherwise inexplicable miracle of our survival. It is the cipher-key to the riddle of our elusive source of power, a power that has proved stronger and more enduring

by far than the mightiest forces of all the military marionettes that the world has known.

If I speak tonight of this faith of our fathers, instead of the more obvious and clamorous themes which crowd the headlines, it is because this holy day calls us back to the fundamental values of living. None of us tonight can for a moment forget the tragedy that has overwhelmed our co-religionists in darkest Europe, the torture and degradation, the exile and mass-murder that have destroyed entire Jewish communities. Who can or would escape on such a day as this—a day of memorial—from reflecting on the enormity of the pain and suffering that racks this convulsed planet; the incalculable destruction that has blown the creative efforts of the centuries into rubble; the hordes of tyranny that now, at long last, are slowly but irresistibly being driven back to their rendezvous with retribution? Nor on this day made doubly sacred by fond memories of home and loved ones, who can resist from dwelling with more than usual warmth and longing upon thoughts of those dear to us, who are risking their lives for our liberties in far-off lands and seas and skies?

All these reflections surge in upon us in this solemn hour, trailing clouds of sadness and of hope, of wistfulness and the promise of happier days to come. Where can we find a firm foundation for this fugitive medley of moods and memories, of dreams and visions, of sorrows and anticipations? What powerful magnet will pull together all these fragments of experience, and hold them sure and steadfast through the years? Let the Psalmist speak once more:

*"Thou art my God.
My times are in Thy hand!"*

Surely our greatest need is to recapture the substance of this text, and weave it into the texture of our lives. Alas, for most of us it has become only a verse from an ancient Jewish anthology; the answer to a question with which to stump the experts. No wonder we have become a confused and demoralized community, uncertain of our status, unsure of our direction, uneasy of our fate. We have exchanged prayer-meetings for mass-meetings, piety for propaganda, affirmations for apologies, and the Testament of our patriarchs for the testimonials of politicians. A people that walked with God through valleys and shadows for three thousand years on the highway of faith is in danger

of being lost in the jostling traffic of London and Washington and Moscow, and the terrorized ghettos of Warsaw and Rome and Berlin.

In Europe tonight millions of our brethren know that they must confront torture and death once more, as Hitler's beaten troops limp back to their lair. The line of retreat from Russia leads through the heart of the most densely Jewish-populated area on the continent. Despite our most heroic efforts, and the cost in blood and treasure, many will have to die. Where shall they find the courage and strength to face the frenzy of their foes, save in the secret places of the spirit, where weapons of torture can never reach?

There is no one here tonight without some loved one in the service of our country. In fox-holes and pill-boxes, in tanks and battle-ships, in war-planes and lonely out-posts, they constantly face sudden and violent death. What would we not give to shield them from danger and harm? Yet how impotent are the resources we can provide for their protection! Must we not yield them trustfully into the keeping of a Guardian in Whose hands are all our destinies?

Tonight we face a new year that holds the promise of better days and happier tidings. God grant that it may bring us peace with victory and honor. For many it will bring care and sorrow, affliction and bereavement. To all it will bring strange journeys and adventures and the thrill of living in a world in transition. All of us must share the sorrows of the old world that is dying, and the travail of the new world that is being born.

What shall sustain us amid these changing scenes and shifting values?

We can step across the threshold of the new year into the new world with courage and with dignity, with proud confidence in our status as Jews and Americans, prepared to meet life on any terms it brings, if our hearts ring with the conviction:

*"Thou art my God.
My times are in Thy hand!"*

WHERE IS THY GOD?¹

MANY people nowadays are asking a question which has a familiar ring to students of Old Testament literature: "Where is thy God?" It is not only the cynics and skeptics who are taunting men of faith with this inquiry. Even sincere and earnest people whose religious convictions go back to childhood find themselves pondering this searching query. Bewildered by the triumphs of the forces of evil, confounded by the tragedy that has overwhelmed peace-loving peoples, baffled by the success of an inverted morality, people are asking in tones of bitterness and sorrow, of meditation and challenge: "How can God permit such things to happen? 'Where is thy God?'"

The question is not new. It is probably as old as the spirit of inquiry in the human race. In one form or another it has fallen from the lips of every generation that has ever lived. It is the central theme of the Book of Job. In its most familiar form it occurs in the forty-second Psalm. Whoever wrote that poem was in all likelihood one of the captives of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. His country lay in ruins. He had been dragged off into slavery where his persecutors, not content with torturing his body, consummated their cruelty by mocking his deepest religious convictions. "Where is thy God?"

Today this question is one which no honest preacher will attempt to evade. As a general rule, theological subjects are not popular with modern congregations. Most people, when they go to the synagogue, want to hear the minister talk about the more exciting events of the day. In times of crisis, however, people are more willing to give a hearing to the eternal verities which great religion proclaims. Unable to find meaning and order in the confused pattern of life about them, men turn to the word of God for guidance and counsel. The discerning among them know that church and synagogue have lived through crises as desperate as we face today and out of their rich and immemorial experience have evolved a philosophy and a faith to sustain the souls of men.

What has been the answer of Judaism through the ages to those who in dark and tortured hours have asked the question, "Where is thy God?"

To begin with, Judaism has never sought to exculpate God from participation in human sorrow and suffering. There are some people, you know, who

¹Delivered October 11, 1940, on Yom Kippur Eve.

have a direct and simple answer to the query, "Where is thy God?" They reply that God has nothing whatever to do with human troubles. They maintain that we should not blame God for the evils and disasters which cause so much personal and social suffering. They argue that God is a God of goodness. He is perfect and all His ways are perfect. Consequently, it is not only erroneous, it is blasphemous to hold God responsible for our misfortunes. This point of view is advanced not only by many sincere individuals, but there are organized churches which are committed to it.

Such a belief can find no support in Judaism. Those who maintain it are obliged to account for the existence of evil by attributing it to the work of a power outside of God, an anti-God, or the devil. This view divides the rule of the universe between two forces. When evil triumphs, there is no escaping the logical conclusion that God has been overcome by a power greater than Himself. Such a position inescapably involves a dualistic interpretation of nature. In plain language, it means that there are two powers hostile to one another who are constantly at war for the control of the universe.

Now that point of view is totally unacceptable to Judaism. It runs counter to the whole spirit and teaching of our faith. No Jew need be told that our religion rests upon the belief in the unity of God. That means that there is only one supreme Power That created the universe and guides and controls everything in it according to His will. That affirmation represents one of the unique contributions of the Jew to human culture. Today it is widely accepted throughout the world and is confirmed by modern philosophy and science, but believe me, it was a revolutionary doctrine when it was first proclaimed. It was obliged to vanquish the conflicting claims of polytheism according to which there were many gods who exercised special functions and divided among themselves the rule of the world. Long ago, in Persia, for example, Zoroastrianism taught the doctrine of dualism, and personified the powers of good and evil, which were constantly at war with one another, calling them the power of light and the power of darkness. The counter position of Judaism, formulated centuries ago, is set forth in words still used in our prayer book: "Thou formest light and darkness, createst good and evil and bringest harmony into nature."

No, I suspect that we Jews, if we are to be guided in this dilemma by the religious philosophy of our faith, will have to find some way to account for

the world's woes other than by saying that God has nothing to do with them and blaming them on a force of evil.

But if God is a God of justice and righteousness, as Judaism teaches, why, then, does He permit a tragedy like this war to happen? Why does He allow innocent men and women and children to become the helpless victims of brutality and aggression if He is the governing force behind the universe? That is a fair question and demands an honest answer. And it has received many honest answers. Frankly, I doubt whether any or all of them together have been wholly satisfactory. Man's groping intelligence has grappled with this persistent problem for centuries. But the universe still keeps its mysteries and God's ways are not our ways nor His thoughts our thoughts. It is one of those insolubles described in Deuteronomy as "the secret things" that "belong to the Lord our God."

To be sure, this universe is under no obligation to explain itself to us. Moreover, is it not presumptuous of us with our finite intelligences to demand all the answers to the riddles of the cosmos? And yet, we are under compulsion to find some sort of meaning in our world if life is to be endured. And so, although no human brain has formulated a conclusive answer to this question of the ages, the roads along which men have travelled in search of it may indicate the direction that our thinking must take if we are to come to terms with this problem.

For one thing, part of our answer lies in the realization that human beings have been endowed with free will. That is how God has made us. Deep down in our hearts we know that we are more than victims of heredity and environment. Had God been so minded, He could have made the human race as dependent as marionettes. Like the master of a puppet show, He could have controlled our every thought and gesture. But for reasons best known to Himself, He chose otherwise. He preferred to create a race of men equipped with intelligence and reason and invite them to share with Him the responsibility for perfecting the world. Is He now to stultify Himself by making it unnecessary for men to use their endowments?

God has not chosen to pamper us by solving all our problems for us and reducing us to utter dependency by satisfying our every need with no effort on our part. I should think that an American, at least, would appreciate a God like that. Our national spirit abhors the type of paternalistic government that

puts food into the mouths of people who are either unwilling or too lazy to earn it for themselves. We view with consternation the mounting invitations to dependency through public support that are extended to able-bodied people who, if they would use the energies and brains that they possess, could work out their problems very satisfactorily. A government that relieves an individual from the necessity of exerting himself in his own behalf will shortly wake up to discover that its paternalistic policy has bankrupted not only the finances of the nation, but what is more serious, the initiative and morale of its citizens. It is possible, you know, for people to get so used to having everything done for them that they either lose or never develop the ability to do anything for themselves. How much reverence would you have for a God Who governed the human family that way?

That is the first observation of Judaism on this matter. The second is that this universe is permeated by inflexible law. There is nothing in all creation which is outside the rule of God's law. It is not very difficult to demonstrate this in the physical universe. Scientists have discovered many of these laws, although as yet, despite our intellectual conceit, we scarcely know more than how to label our ignorance. Nevertheless, we have unravelled certain secrets of the universe and can express them in terms of chemical and mathematical formulae. Before we understood the operation of those laws, we were a much more miserable and vulnerable society. Not only were our casualties in terms of sickness, suffering and death enormous, but we were at the mercy of soothsayers, magicians and peddlers of superstitions whose enchantments and incantations preceded the chemistry and physics of our day. We know better now. Our knowledge of natural law has given us the means of reducing the areas of unhappiness in the world.

Similarly, there are spiritual laws governing this world. They may not be as obvious and as utilitarian as the more familiar rules of natural science, but depend upon it, they are just as universal and as inflexible as the laws governing the speed of falling bodies and the velocity of radio waves.

Truth is mightier than falsehood. Justice is greater than force. Love is stronger than hate. Those are some of the axioms of the spiritual geometry which God has written into this planet. Do you suppose that we can disregard them with impunity any more than we can violate the physical laws, and not suffer the consequences?

Pierre von Passen, in "Days of Our Years," has written a graphic description of conditions in Europe after the last World War. Among other things, he described the prostration and impoverishment of Germany following the Treaty of Versailles and the superhuman effort of the Weimar Republic to prevent the total collapse of the nation. In moving words, Mr. von Passen tells of the visit which Herr Bruening, the German Chancellor, made to Paris to urge the French government to mitigate the severity of its sanctions against his people. Hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen lined the streets to cheer the German delegation on its way to the conference. Von Passen continues the story as follows:

"Herr Bruening and his collaborators spent the night in conference. They had brought with them irrefutable evidence in figures and facts that Germany was on the verge of the abyss.

"At seven in the morning—it was a Sunday—Bruening went to the Church of Notre Dame. He prayed for an hour and heard Mass. At ten o'clock he was received by M. Laval. The German Chancellor expressed his views, and pleaded with the French Foreign Minister for two hours. When he noticed that he could not soften the heart of the Frenchman, he fell on his knees. He spoke of the misery of his country, the sense of frustration of the German youth, the dull hopelessness of the situation if France would not lift some of the burdens imposed at Versailles. He warned of an economic débacle which might, through its repercussions, drag other countries, France herself, into a chaotic whirlpool. *He named the 'Sinister Forces' that were waiting to take over the reins in Germany if he (Bruening) should fail.*

"Laval shook his head. He would not even place Bruening's request for a loan, or a moratorium, before his colleagues in the cabinet. He refused to hold out the least strand of hope. He led the German Chancellor to the door with a polite expression of adieu.

"It was a sunny day in Paris when Pierre Laval signed the death warrant of the German Republic—and paved the road whereby Hitler entered."

I know of no better example in our time to illustrate the operation of God's moral law. To be sure, there have been others. Think back through recent years and recall how flagrantly we have trampled upon the elementary principles of decency and justice, the outrages that we have permitted or suffered in silence: the devastation of Spain, the rape of Ethiopia, the conquest of Man-

churia, the spiritual murder of Austria, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia; and the list might be extended.

And now, when the world is convulsed in the therapeutic process of restoring the moral equilibrium, do you still ask, "Where is thy God?" Do you now want Him to perform a miracle and save us from the consequences of our blundering stupidity and cruelty? That sounds like the plea of a murderer who has killed his father and mother and asks to be pardoned because he is an orphan.

When we wanted a bridge built across the Golden Gate, we did not implore God to "pass a miracle" and build it for us. We rolled up our sleeves, applied the rules of physics and mathematics and built it. When we wanted Treasure Island, we did not ask God to make it for us, to spare us a monumental job of dredging. We went out and used our God-given faculties to build it out of materials that He has made available.

Well, God has given us all the materials we need for a warless world of brotherhood and goodwill. He has established and disclosed the spiritual laws which must be observed in the building of that society. If now we choose to ignore those laws, and build from blueprints that have been rejected by the Great Architect of the universe, when our world comes crashing about us in ruins, how can we cry, "Where is thy God?"

And yet, although man's free will and the moral order of the universe go a long way toward supplying an answer to our question, I would not for a moment pretend that they dispose of it conclusively. Large areas of uncertainty still remain. How about the sufferings of the innocent? Why does a just God permit millions, for instance, who were not responsible as individuals for the present world situation, to endure persecution and ruin?

Here again, only a very brash person would presume to answer with finality. When Job, who was a righteous man, was bereft of his family and possessions, and smitten with a dread disease, he found God within himself in the conviction that he was innocent of any wrongdoing. That is a valid theological attitude. But there is another explanation for the suffering of the innocent—not theological, but sociological. We do not live in this world as hermits in self-sufficient isolation. Were a man left all alone on this earth, he would perish speedily. All our days are spent in association with others. That, too, is part of God's plan. Scripture tells us that God did not think it good for man to be

alone. In more ways than we can ever reckon, we share in the benefits and advantages of social organization, of community cooperation. By the same token, we also share in the punishments and penalties for community transgressions.

A municipal water system benefits an entire city, but let those mains become polluted and the contamination will be distributed with equal impartiality. Will you blame God for the plague—or insist on more rigid measures of sanitation? Our modern highways have eliminated the pioneer hardships of travel and made neighbors of strangers. If reckless drivers use them for speedways and slaughter innocent pedestrians, will you turn atheist—or use your intelligence and authority to end these senseless casualties? You cannot have the rewards of collective enterprise without sharing in its hazards and responsibilities, and when your city, state or nation blunders in wilfulness or folly, don't blaspheme God, but mend your own ineptitude.

What comfort or reassurance can we find in all of this to help us meet the challenge of our time? Granted that we are more than puppets manipulated by fate, that the world has moral backing, and that community relationships affect our destinies, how can we translate these propositions into attitudes of dignity and courage?

I think the implications of these truths are clear. God has given us reason, power and judgment. Our mental, physical and spiritual equipment is adequate for a useful and a happy life. Let us use those talents responsibly.

We cannot enjoy the benefits of a highly complex and integrated communal life without sharing in the penalties for the transgressions which that society commits. Do your part in removing those evils. Take the lead in correcting its shortcomings.

When evil wins its victories, do not despair. Trust God, but trust Him wisely, and give Him a helping hand. Believe that this world has a spiritual origin, spiritual backing, and that falsehood can no more ultimately prevail against truth than a skyrocket defeat the law of gravity.

*"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all."*

A few weeks ago in a sensational address to the Reichstag which was broadcast to the world, Mr. Hitler renewed his threat upon England. Referring to

the suspense among the British caused by his frequently postponed invasion, the Fuehrer brandished his fist toward England, and shrilled: "Don't worry, I'm coming."

Was that only the voice of Adolph Schicklgruber resounding through the spheres, or was it another—greater, more ancient and imperious—a voice that Alexander heard and Caesar and the Corsican, too—the voice that Moses heard on Sinai, and Lincoln on the field of Gettysburg—did that voice reach into the Reichstag that day and echo back those words, "Don't worry, I'm coming?"

THE HIGH COST OF PEACE¹

EVERY year at this season, on the sabbaths between Passover and the Feast of Weeks, it has for centuries been the custom in the Synagogue to supplement the prescribed reading from the Scriptures with a selection from the Ethics of the Fathers. This small but celebrated literary masterpiece is a part of the Talmud, that monumental and often maligned compendium of wisdom and jurisprudence which is one of the great religious products of a bygone age. The Ethics of the Fathers is for Jews the most familiar and best-loved portion of the Talmud. It is a collection of the wise sayings of our ancient rabbis, an anthology of epigrams, maxims, and rules of moral conduct, representing for the most part the quintessence of the experience and sagacity of Israel's great teachers.

This little book has had a profound influence in shaping Jewish character and conduct. It was memorized in its entirety by countless generations of Jewish youth. To this day it is included in the book of prayer used in every synagogue.

Nearly everyone, I suppose, knows the famous Golden Rule of Jesus, quoted in Matthew: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." What is not generally known, however, is that Jesus learned that precept from a renowned Jewish teacher named Hillel, who taught it this way: "What is hateful to thee, do not unto thy fellow-man—this is the whole law, the rest is mere commentary." That was Hillel's most frequently quoted maxim, but among the many which he coined, there is another, which faithfully mirrors the character of its saintly author. "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving thy fellow-men, and drawing them near to the Torah." Let us take a closer look at the implications of this verse for our own time.

Note in the first place, that this counsel begins significantly enough with the exhortation to love peace. It is quite evident that Hillel considered peace one of the indispensable conditions of individual and social welfare. He lived in Jerusalem at a time when Roman imperialism was extending its martial sway over the Mediterranean world, when wars and alarums of wars were constantly terrorizing entire populations, when nations were systematically and steadily being drained of their blood and treasure to feed the vanity of

¹Delivered May 8, 1943, "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

ambitious emperors. He was certainly under no illusions regarding the wickedness and wastefulness of war.

I suppose there is no one listening in this afternoon who does not share that conviction. War is an evil—one of the most monstrous of all the evils that bedevil the human race. No amount of pretending that it is not or of beating about the bush will make it less of an evil. But having said that as earnestly and as explicitly as possible, let us go on to say that there are far greater evils than war, and far greater crimes against the human spirit than militarism. War is preferable to degradation. Death may be more attractive than slavery. To take up arms for freedom and truth, for human decency and the right of a man to call his soul his own, is infinitely more virtuous than to go through life grovelling on one's knees. I suspect that Heaven will forgive a man or a nation for choosing rather to risk death bravely on a battle-field than to cling to existence miserably in a concentration camp.

But thus to accept war as the lesser of two evils, frankly to recognize it as an irrational albeit effective way of opposing an even greater wickedness, is not the same thing as to glorify it with extravagant superlatives and to sanctify it with ecclesiastical endorsements. Yet that is precisely what does happen in some nations. Listen to this: "There is no better death in the world than to be slain by the enemy." Who said that? Not Washington or Lincoln, you may be sure. It was the German Chancellor Von Papen. "War is the climax of human achievement." Who uttered that bombastic nonsense? Not MacArthur or Doolittle. That priceless gem of militaristic stupidity was pontificated by General Von Seeckt, Chief of the Nazi Reichswehr. "War is hell!" You know who said that. It was General Sherman. We agree.

To say that you love peace, however, is next door to meaningless. Only a diseased mentality would take issue with that affirmation. But it is not enough to love peace. None of the democracies wanted this war, yet all of them are fighting it. It is not enough to pray for peace. Every church and synagogue, every mosque and shrine, every minister, priest and rabbi prayed for peace, yet we got war. It is not enough even to fight for peace. We did that, you remember, in the last war, which was supposed to end all wars. Yet here we are repeating the same idiocy, and on an infinitely more stupendous and destructive scale. There is surely something wrong here. Evidently to get peace more is required than to love it, or to pray for it, or to fight for it. See what has

happened to lovers of peace all over the world who shouted themselves hoarse in demonstrations for peace, while at the same time demonstrating an infinitely greater love for other things which made war an unavoidable certainty.

Hillel clearly realized the futility of a benevolent attitude toward peace unsupported by a socially effective program for its attainment. Consequently he went on to complete and to implement his counsel: "Loving peace and pursuing peace, loving thy fellow-men and bringing them near the Torah." Pacifism must be realistic, or it becomes ridiculous. The pursuit of peace involves renunciation. It calls for self-discipline, self-control and sacrifice. It means foregoing the pursuit of other things that men prize dearly, the abandonment of well-worn trails that lead through greed and selfishness and exploitation inevitably to the arena of industrial conflict or the battle-field.

This is a moral universe. There are spiritual laws governing human relations as inexorable in their operation as the laws that regulate the velocity of light or the speed of falling bodies. In the spiritual as in the physical world, you cannot get the results you desire, unless you first fulfill the necessary conditions. During the Dark Ages, there were well-intentioned but ignorant alchemists who confidently believed they could convert base metals into gold. Today every schoolboy laughs at their credulity, but how have we shown ourselves more intelligent? Think of the immoral ingredients we have thrown into the cauldron of human relations—arrogance, vanity, selfishness, greed, intolerance, the love of ease and luxury, indifference to violent wrong—and then awaited the result in terms of a messianic utopia! No alchemist ever nourished a more fantastic delusion. As though peace could be bought at such a price!

The great disillusionment which overtook all the apostles of peace at the outbreak of this war was due to a fundamental fallacy in their conception of the nature of peace. We talked and acted as though peace were an objective goal toward which you could travel, as one travels from San Francisco to New York, with treaties and trade-agreements for tickets. Platitudes and propaganda were our vehicles. Now we know better. Peace is not so much a terminal as an atmosphere. It is a by-product, resulting from the harmonious adjustment of all the moral values and social forces in our world. When every man shall be kindly disposed to his neighbor, when honesty and fair-dealing shall prevail in personal and international relations, when the gulf between

the privileged and the disinherited shall have been spanned, when the moral law shall govern the deeds of men and the counsels of nations, then peace will follow as inevitably as the dawn succeeds the darkness.

To be sure, this is no easy task, but it is not an impossible one. It is surely easier by far than to bear the burdens that war lays upon us, the destruction of our cities, the wasting of our substance, the degradation of our civilization, the slaughter of our loved ones, the bitterness of defeat, and the frustrations of victory.

Today we are summoned to sacrifice for war. With what pride and eagerness the nation meets that challenge! No effort seems too great, no renunciation too costly, no task too exacting or menial. With what gallantry and lavishness we pour out blood and treasure to protect our land and guard its liberties!

How long shall we pay for war with blood and sweat and toil and tears, when we might purchase peace with love and faith and justice and reason? How long shall we choose rather to kill and be killed than to live and help live?

If East and West can span the seas and close their ranks as United Nations to wage and win a war, why in common sense can they not band together to make and maintain a peace? If we are willing that the wealth and labor of our land be sent abroad in overflowing measure, and with no thought of repayment, to bring destruction and death to mankind, shall we not, in the name of sanity, and for the merest fraction of that wicked cost, lend-lease our resources to bring healing and happiness to humanity, and abolish the causes that make for war?

In happier times we were often wont to remind ourselves of Milton's classic phrase that "Peace hath her victories no less renown'd than war." Of this too we may be sure, that peace hath its price no less than war. It cannot be bought with pious hopes or fine phrases. It cannot be found at the end of a diplomatic document or an economic system. It can only come into being in a society where men have learned to live together in amity and helpfulness, "loving peace and pursuing peace, loving their fellow-men, and bringing them near to God's law of truth and righteousness."

FUTILE WEAPONS¹

THE prophets of Israel are popularly regarded as masters of invective and satire, fierce in their denunciation of arrogant privilege, and unsparing in their arraignment of political corruption and economic unscrupulousness. "I will break you in pieces" was the threat that Jeremiah spoke in the name of the Lord to the evildoers of his time. "I will turn your feasts into mourning" was the grim message of Amos. "I will smite thee with a grievous wound, I will make thee desolate because of thy sins," declared Micah to his unregenerate contemporaries. Vigorous language that, and devastating in its stark eloquence!

Yet these same prophets who could hurl thunderbolts when Israel was basking in lusty prosperity, could also speak words of compassion and courage in days of disaster and suffering. They knew how to bring comfort and healing to the souls of the sorely stricken, and inspire them with unconquerable faith. So spoke Isaiah to the captives in Babylon. Their state had been destroyed, their families slain or enslaved, and they were in exile. To an ordinary man it would appear that the Jewish people had been effectively liquidated; that their turn had come to join the countless nations of the ancient world in the silent halls of forgotten history. But Isaiah felt otherwise. He had a deep conviction that God had marked this people for an heroic destiny. They were the bearers of a great and holy revelation, the servants of a world-transforming idea, eternal witnesses to a deathless truth. That historic task was the guarantee of their indestructibility. Of that Isaiah was convinced. There in the hopelessness of captivity and exile he brought them this astounding assurance:

*"No weapon that is forged against thee shall prosper;
And every tongue that is raised against thee in judgment thou shalt confute."*

Isaiah was right. His prophecy came true. Babylon fell, but Israel survived. Not the captives, but the conquerors disappeared. The small voice of Jerusalem outlived the great clamor of Nineveh. The message of Israel outlasted the oracles of antiquity. Through Christianity and Mohammedanism it won

¹Delivered May 1, 1943 "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

more lands and peoples than all the conquerors of history put together. Israel, said an ancient sage, guarded the Torah, the Holy Writ, and the Torah, in turn, guarded Israel. This little religious community, numerically insignificant, politically negligible, economically weak, physically under-nourished and socially scorned, has persisted in unbroken continuity through thirty-five centuries of unparalleled persecution and unwavering devotion to its God.

*"No weapon that is forged against thee shall prosper;
And every tongue that is raised against thee in judgment thou shalt confute."*

I suspect that possibly at no time since Isaiah spoke those words, has Israel more sorely needed the courage they convey than today. To be sure, we have known periods of cruel suffering many times before this tragic age. Except for rare intervals, there has scarcely been a century in which we were not the first victims of man's lust for power and passion for cruelty, and in the cataclysmic epochs of human history, such as the Black Death, the Crusades, the Hundred Years War, the Napoleonic Wars, and the First World War, then were we set upon with redoubled fury. But even these dismal chapters of our history pale before the enormity of the terror that has engulfed our people on the European continent today. Two million Jews have been slaughtered. They were not killed on the battle-field, where they might bravely have met a patriot's death. They were not casualties of bombing raids, victims of the terror that knows no race or creed, but falls from the skies indiscriminately upon a whole community. They did not starve to death, sharing on terms of equality with their Greek and Polish fellow-countrymen the famine which the apostles of the New Order in Europe deliberately created. No, these two million Jews were never even given a chance to share the common suffering and the common sacrifice. With cold and precise calculation, with that teutonic thoroughness which has surely earned the Nazis a special niche in the halls of infamy, these valiant warriors of the Master-Race singled out the Jews of Germany and of every land they conquered as the special beneficiaries of their perfected persecution techniques.

They stripped them of their property. They took away their citizenship. They branded them as outcasts. They made them wear a badge of shame. They burned their synagogues. In community after community they rounded

them up, as out here in the West we round up cattle, except that no cattleman, drunk or sober, would abuse his stock as the Nazis torture the Jews. They actually loaded them into cattle-trains, or into hermetically sealed freight cars, without food or water—old men and little children, terror-stricken women, and men who had been leaders of culture and enlightenment in their communities, and they sent two million of them off to be butchered in slaughter-houses, to face firing squads in lonely forests, to starve to death or to die of disease in the pestilential ghetto of Warsaw!

This much has already happened. More millions are marked for extermination. The United Nations have officially attested to the truth of this monstrous and unparalleled butchery, and reaffirmed their “solemn resolution to insure that those responsible for these crimes shall not escape retribution.” The Christian churches of the world have published stern and courageous protests against this shocking barbarism, which even in a war-torn, suffering world, filled with national woes and private griefs, cries out for pity and relief. In Holland the General Synod of Dutch Churches and the Roman Catholic hierarchy has condemned the “unmerciful and unjust treatment meted out to Jews by those in power in our country.” In Belgium, Catholic priests and Protestant pastors have appealed to their congregations to pray every day for “the persecuted and tortured Jewish brethren.” In Norway and Denmark, in Sweden and Spain, in Switzerland and Hungary—yes, even in Germany and France, intrepid churchmen of all denominations have denounced this frightful cruelty against a people innocent of every charge save only this: that their ancestors wrote the Bible and gave the Western world its Savior.

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America has proclaimed tomorrow, May 2nd, a Day of Compassion and Intercession for the suffering Jews of Nazi Europe. The announcement describes that suffering as “beyond anything the civilized imagination can picture,” and it continues, “It is impossible to dismiss the reports as ‘atrocities stories.’ When the full story is known, the actual facts may turn out to be worse than the fragmentary reports have indicated.” Tomorrow the prayers of millions of our Christian brethren in America will invoke God’s mercy on these stricken people, and beseech Him to help us find a way to save at least a remnant from extinction. American Israel is grateful for this evidence of religious fellowship and effective sympathy. It is another golden link in the chain of Jewish-Christian

brotherhood which we are patiently and lovingly fashioning in this blessed land of liberty. It is the latest token of our common loyalty to a classic religious tradition which teaches "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Israel asks no special favors from the world. Our constant prayer is so to live that we may merit the favor of God. We seek no exemption from the heat of battle and the common suffering of our fellow-men. Is it too much, however, to ask that we be not singled out for special cruelty and gratuitous persecution?

In days to come, my people will have little reason to recall with satisfaction the name of Hitler. But for one favor we are his eternal debtors. *He has not permitted a single Jew to join the Nazi party or to wear a German uniform.* For that we fervently thank God. Thank God no Jew has been compelled to be an accomplice to the Nazi crimes against humanity! Thank God no Jew has had a part in the savagery and destruction that Hitler's hordes have loosed upon the world!

When every conquest of this arrogant man shall have been redeemed, when every nation that he has despoiled shall have been restored, when every freedom that he has crushed shall have been regained, and every light he has extinguished shall glow again with renewed splendor, he shall slowly recede from the footlights of the world's stage into the footnotes of the world's history. But he shall be damned to immortality by his persecution of an immortal people. With Pharaoh and Haman he shall be longest and most surely remembered to infamy by a priest-people whose trust is in the God of history, whose strength and salvation is in the eternal promise:

*"No weapon that is forged against thee shall prosper;
And every tongue that is raised against thee in judgment thou shalt confute."*

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMMUNITY¹

EVERY critical situation calls for the release of extraordinary power. Normally you do not use more than a small fraction of the available horse-power in the automobile you drive, but if an emergency arises in which added energy is urgently required, you call on your engine for everything it has. If it responds adequately, your predicament is solved; if it fails, you come to grief. In that respect, most people are like motor cars. Ordinarily they do not employ their full capacities; they can handle the routine affairs of life without any special effort or added pressure. Let a crisis arise, however, and the situation immediately changes. Then they are forced to draw upon their reserves. Such tests of character are commonplace. Sooner or later, in one form or another, they come to everyone. That old Jewish sage Hillel (about whom I spoke to you last week) knew human nature well enough to understand that. He knew that in every life there are occasions which challenge the complete resources of the individual. There are causes to be served and ideals to be championed which require the determined dedication of the best that is in us. Hence this counsel, found among the maxims which he left his disciples: "In a place where there are no men, strive thou to be a man."

Such an admonition could have been given only by someone who had faith in the limitless possibilities of personality. We human beings often present a sordid and pitiful spectacle, displaying traits of character that even animals would shun, and perpetrating infamies such as only the ingenious imagination of man could devise. But we have another side too, which is just as authentic and characteristic. Robin Hood was a thief, but a benefactor as well. For bribery and corruption Francis Bacon was sentenced to prison, but he was also a man of virtues and genius. Man is a paradox, capable of infinite villainy and immeasurable benevolence. Each of us, in greater or less degree, is a Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde. All great literature elaborates this theme; in the Bible it appears again and again. The very same race of man whose evil imagination and defiant wickedness filled the earth with violence, was also endowed with possibilities for perfection in the very image and likeness of God. Listen to the Psalmist:

¹Delivered May 15, 1943, "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

The Individual and the Community

*"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that Thou thinkest of him?
Yet Thou hast made him but little lower than the angels,
And has crowned him with glory and honor."*

Quite a flattering estimate of the human species, is it not? Shakespeare, who portrayed the depravity of man more dramatically than anyone before or since, could also eulogize his virtues:

*"What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason!
how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how
express and admirable! in action how like an angel!
in apprehension how like a god!"*

It is that heroic conception of man which has found its way into our daily speech as a measuring-rod of approved behavior. When we say that a person has acted "manfully," when we talk about the "manly" development of youth, we are speaking in terms of bravery, courage, resolution, and fine character. Surely that was what Hillel had in mind when he said, "In a place where there are no men, strive thou to be a man."

Nothing in the life of the present generation has made the appeal of our text so obvious as this war. Say what you will about its wickedness and waste, its frightfulness and suffering, war does bring to the surface some of the noblest qualities in human nature. You and I know people who, before Pearl Harbor, never thought of anything but their own comfort and pleasure, never gave a willing dollar to a worthy cause or an unselfish hour to a community service. Now all that is changed. In a situation that calls for manliness, they are acquitting themselves as men.

It is curious to see how differently people react to identical circumstances. In one person a crisis like this evokes the best that is in him; in another it reveals the worst. To one this war spells challenge, to another despair. Some discover that it has made their lives more significant, more adventurous and useful; others become panic-stricken, despondent, and go all to pieces. Instead of making a positive contribution to the morale of their group, they are distinct personal and public liabilities. They go about with long faces and longer complaints about shortages and rationing, the conduct of the war and the

politics of our allies; they evade wartime restrictions, and lapse into uncontrolled and shameless hysteria when some member of the family is called up for service. What an amazing contrast we have here with the dominant mood of the nation! Throughout the country all sorts of people from all walks of life and every creed and color are responding to the challenge that this war has made to them personally, in a way that reveals qualities of dignity and altruism which lay hidden and undiscovered in the deep places of their personality. They are serving; they are sacrificing; they are accepting without complaint the deprivations that must be paid as part of the price of victory. "In a place where there are no men, strive thou to be a man."

The classic example of what we are driving at is afforded by the magnificent stand of England in the dark days following Dunkirk. I suppose that nowhere in the history of human heroism has there been a more dramatic illustration of gallantry on a national scale. France had fallen. The British forces had been driven from the continent with staggering losses. No people had ever endured such terror as the Germans rained from the skies upon England. So hopeless appeared her prospects of continuing the unequal struggle that nearly all the world's military experts, studying their charts, surveying their maps, analyzing their statistics, believed that the end had come. What they failed to include in their calculations was the unconquerable spirit of an embattled nation fighting for its liberty, the unbeatable resolution of an entire people prepared, if need be, to confront posterity with the epitaph: "This was their finest hour." In a place where manhood was needed, England found her men.

Only among a people reared in the tradition of the importance of the individual, could such qualities of manliness have developed. It is significant that Hillel's exhortation is phrased in the second person singular: "Strive thou to be a man." The individual is important in the classic Jewish-Christian tradition. Our Torah—the Five Books of Moses—opens with the creation of one man, Adam; and ends with the death of one man, Moses. In rabbinic literature we are reminded that although a king mints many coins, they are all exactly alike. "How much greater," said our sages, "is the King of Kings, who has fashioned so many myriads of human beings, and no two of them identical." The same idea informs the New Testament. Democracy represents the political counterpart of that tradition, for it too, emphasizes the importance of the individual personality.

It is at this point that our classic religious and political convictions clash with the dominant temper of our age. We are witnessing in our day a growing tendency toward collectivism. Now there are certain areas of organized social activity in which collectivism offers many advantages. Our public schools, our state and national highways, our postoffices, and many of our municipal departments such as police, fire, water and sanitation are collectively operated. In most instances that arrangement has worked out decidedly to our advantage, and we would not want to return to the old basis. But there are still large areas of life where individualism is indispensable. Family life, for example, founded upon the love and loyalty of the individuals in a home—we don't want that collectivized. It was Beethoven who wrote the Fifth Symphony and not a co-operative commune; it is Toscanini who directs it with such incomparable genius, and not a council of bureaucrats. And so it is in all of art, science, poetry, religion, literature and every realm of activity which depends upon the free exercise of the individual, creative personality. To be sure, the technological developments of modern science may persuade us to travel quite a bit farther on the road of collectivism, but no enlightened society can exist and long remain enlightened, unless it freely recognizes the supreme importance of the individual. We do not want the kind of "rugged" individualism which brought us so perilously close to catastrophe, nor the type that inevitably ends up in fascism, nor least of all do we want the kind of individualism that exalts the tyrant and the despot. The ideal man in a free society is the creative, integrated individual, who, despite his social dependence and community relationships, is none the less an individuated personality.

Certainly that is the spirit and the goal of America. Throughout the nation, tomorrow has been proclaimed "I am an American" day. What does it mean to be an American? Well, I do not doubt that speakers all over the country will suggest many eloquent and patriotic interpretations of that text, but upon this I venture there would be unanimous agreement: To be an American means to be opposed to the regimentation of the individual and the enslavement of the free spirit of man. It means more than the mass production of refrigerators and automobiles and radios, more than a bathtub in every home and two chickens in every pot. Of the ten million men fighting in our armed forces, how many, do you suppose, would risk their lives on foreign battle-

fields for these things? Nay, it is because to be an American means to believe in human freedom, in the dignity of the individual, the inviolability of personality, and those intangible but powerful spiritual values which the Founding Fathers wove into the texture of the American Dream, that we stand today upon the ramparts of civilization. In a world that cries out desperately for men to redeem mankind, to be an American is to answer that call.

MAN'S DEEPEST NEED — HUMILITY¹

RECENTLY I read about a Spanish girl who visited England for the first time. As her train approached London she looked out upon the crowded expanse of houses, factories and tall chimneys. "These people have no view," she cried, in dismay. Anyone who has lived in the open country or even a city dweller who from his window can look out upon the changing beauty of ocean and mountains and sky, can sympathize with the outburst of that Spanish girl. What a pity it is to have no view!

Infinitely sadder, however, it is to have no mental view, to be lacking in foresight and insight. Yet that is where most people are notoriously handicapped. Their minds are walled in by prejudices and rigid habits of thinking, their imaginations are constricted by fixed ideas and dogmas. They cannot perceive anything that is original and unfamiliar. When Galileo said that the earth revolves around the sun, he was persecuted as a dangerous fanatic. Who could believe that? When Robert Fulton talked about building a boat that would travel without oars or sails, people looked at him pathetically. The idea was fantastic. Today we look back upon Galileo's and Fulton's generation with a condescending smile at their unsophistication. "They had no view," we say.

In the Ethics of the Fathers there is a word of wisdom that deals pertinently with this common human failing. Ben Azzai said, "Underestimate no man and revile no thing, for there is not a man who hath not his hour, nor a thing that hath not its place." Ben Azzai was not only a scholar but a wise man. There is a great difference between scholarship and wisdom which we often fail to draw. He had lived long and reflected deeply upon the unpredictable possibilities of human nature and the changing character of truth. He knew that today's fool may be tomorrow's philosopher and today's philosophy tomorrow's folly. Moreover, he was a profoundly pious man. This maxim reveals not merely a sound social perspective, but a deep religious faith. Since God is the author of life and the ruler of human affairs, everything He has created has its appointed place in the divine economy; the leper in his rags, the tyrant on his throne, the scholar in his cell, the beast in the jungle and the flower in the crannied wall, all have their role in the divine plan. "Therefore,"

¹ Delivered May 22, 1943, "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

said Ben Azzai, “underestimate no man and revile no thing, for there is not a man who hath not his hour, nor a thing that hath not its place.”

There are many reasons for our resistance to originality in ideas and men, but underlying all of them is our lack of humility. Every generation cherishes the illusion that it has arrived at the final truth; or if it does not go quite so far, it is convinced that it possesses the only correct approach to truth. In 1641, a Frenchman named de Caus said that steam might be employed to propel vehicles on land and ships at sea. That precocious notion cost him his liberty; they promptly clapped him into an asylum for the insane. To the very end of his life the great philosopher Bacon refused to believe that the earth revolved about the sun. The facts, he said, were obviously against any such ridiculous notion. When Professor Tait of Edinburgh was informed of the invention of the telephone, he declared, “It is all humbug; such a discovery is physically impossible.” Shortly after Edison invented his phonograph, the Abbé Moigno arranged for a demonstration of the new instrument before the Paris Academy of Sciences. Every man who attended declared that it was impossible to reproduce the human voice by means of a metal disc. The Abbé was accused of having concealed a ventriloquist beneath the table. Instances of this sort might be endlessly multiplied. There is no field of human interest or social activity in which the arrogant dogmatism of men with set ideas did not block the advance of learning. They insisted that their truth was the only possible truth. Sigmund Freud is revered today as the founder of a school of thought which has revolutionized modern therapy and penology. His researches have opened up mysterious and undiscovered continents of consciousness in every personality. They are acclaimed among the greatest scientific triumphs of modern times. But when Freud first announced his conclusions in Vienna, he was denounced as an unscientific charlatan, excluded from the laboratories and driven from academic life. Had his colleagues possessed a little more intellectual humility, they would not appear so ridiculous to us today.

It is unnecessary for us to labor this point. This much is clear: we have no knowledge except that dogmatism is folly. As Emerson said, “There is no truth so sublime but it may be trivial tomorrow in the light of new thoughts.”

Consider, furthermore, how much wretchedness and tragedy have sprung from our disparagement of men. Napoleon was in his youth one of the least

prepossessing of individuals. Five feet two inches tall, forty-third in his class at the military academy, taciturn, shy and lonely, who could take seriously his wild dreams of conquest and empire? Yet that inconsequential youth, held of no particular importance by his teachers and classmates, did become Napoleon and, as one biographer puts it, "he peopled Hell with the élite of Europe."

After the First World War, an undersized, neurotic house-painter, who had been a lance corporal in a Bavarian regiment, put himself at the head of a gang of bullies and ruffians and hysterically announced that he would make Germany the most powerful nation in the world. His platform was an astounding crazy-quilt of crack-brained ideas which might have been cribbed from the lunatic literature of dangerous degenerates and political imbeciles: racial superiority, religious bigotry, worship of force, subjection of women, elimination of labor-unions, socialists, free-masons and the church. He pulled out every stop in the organ of obscurantism. Who could take seriously this comic opera character with the Charlie Chaplin moustache, who burned books, denounced the Bible and crucifix, and proclaimed Wotan the new God of Germany? Yet he came to power, set up a dictatorship and proceeded to turn Germany into an armed camp. Even when he ordered the occupation of the Ruhr it was still time to have stopped him cold in his tracks, but who could be found among the great powers of the world to take this upstart seriously? Well, today we have a global war on our hands. Misery and destruction have overwhelmed the whole planet, all because we made light of the possibilities of one obscure personality.

"Underestimate no man and revile no thing, for there is not a man who hath not his hour, nor a thing that hath not its place."

Of course, now that we have taken the measure of this menace there can be but one outcome as far as the military victory is concerned. Even here we must be on our guard against under-rating the strength of the forces of evil arrayed against us and their inexhaustible capacity for ingenious deviltry. But once our victory has been gained, what then? Shall we repeat the folly of 1918, and throw away the hard-won prize or use it as an instrument to establish a world order in which war will be impossible?

Indeed, one of the most hopeful things about this war contrasted with all previous wars is that never before during a conflict has there been so much

earnest, thoughtful and constructive discussion and planning of the peace. To be sure, there is a vast amount of cynicism and discouragement to overcome. The inflexible dogmatisms of reactionary isolationists have not been converted. Talk to them of a world federation, an international police force, of economic and political readjustments in the spirit of the Four Freedoms, and like the old men who confronted Galileo and Kepler, Edison and Freud, they solemnly shake their heads and growl: "Incredible, preposterous—it can't be done!" Well, they said that to Washington and Hamilton during the Revolutionary War, when it was proposed that the thirteen colonies unite in a federal union. Despite the cynics and the pessimists, the Union was formed, and today that Union is the last best hope of man on earth. "The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."

Finally, there are many in our time who underestimate the possibilities of religion as an instrument for social progress. Confronted by a world in which evil has won victories on so many fronts, they deride the effectiveness of church and synagogue and flatly declare that religion has failed. May a preacher just as flatly repudiate such nonsense. Some theologies may be obsolete, some churches and synagogues may need spiritual overhauling, some institutions of religion may be pitifully inadequate, but where did we ever get the notion that theologies and architecture and institutions represent religion? Very frequently they misrepresent it. Religion is not a building, nor an organization, nor a set of dogmas. It is a way of life, a pattern of thought, an ideal of conduct. How can you say that these have failed when they have never been seriously tried? When has any nation or any community taken seriously the ethics of the prophets of Israel, or the Ten Commandments, or the Sermon on the Mount? When has any form of government or economic system given more than lip service to these eternal principles? What nonsense it is to say religion has failed. Say rather that it is we who have failed religion. If, God forbid, democracy should be vanquished, could we say it had failed? The ideals of liberty, justice, equality, are as eternal as the stars in their courses. By their very nature, they can never fail. It is only we who can be found wanting.

Sometimes those who defend religion against this charge of failure, try to refute the indictment by citing impressive figures on church and synagogue attendance. Well, no minister will decry the significance of these statistics,

but in the last analysis they are irrelevant. Worship is important as an aid to faith and fine living, but surely the church is not the only place to look for manifestations of the religious spirit. Indeed, sometimes it is the last place to look for it. The prophets had some magnificently disturbing things to say to those who defined religion in terms of ritual. Listen to Amos:

*"I loathe, I despise your festivals.
I cannot abide your sacred assemblies.
Begone from me with the noise of your hymns!
To the music of your harps I will no longer listen.
But let justice flow forth like water,
And righteousness like a perennial stream."*

The religion that is confined to a building or a book is a travesty on faith. Your true barometer of religion is in crowded cities and teeming industries, in human and international relations, in the attitudes that prevail between management and labor, between black men and white men and yellow men, between Christian and Jew, believer and infidel, rich and poor, powerful and disinherited. There is where to look if you want to see how religious we really are.

If that picture is far from ideal, it is not because religion has failed men, but rather because men have failed religion.

Indeed, it is far closer to the truth to say that everything but religion has failed. Science, for example. That was supposed to inaugurate the millenium. That has been tried. Education, for instance. That was hailed as the solvent of all our troubles. Is it not time to give religion a chance? Let those of little faith who despair of religion take care lest they dismiss it too lightly.

Some day a less arrogant but wiser generation shall embrace with humility the invitation to righteousness which is constantly renewed, and in that hour every man will find his place in a world-wide fellowship, and all things shall work together for the glory of God.

MEMORIES AND HOPES¹

TOMORROW is Memorial Day, and throughout the nation we shall honor the memory of our heroic dead. It was Tertullian, an early Church Father, who declared that the "Blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." In like manner we may say that the blood of patriots is the seed of liberty. By the heroism and sacrifice of the men who fought at their country's call, has America become free and great and powerful. In recalling their valor we do more than confer honor upon them. We bear witness to our continuing dedication to the ideals for which they laid down their lives.

Every reflective American must be aware on this Memorial Day of a debt and a responsibility to these honored dead. That they have our reverence and gratitude, is of course, taken for granted. No eulogy is needed, nor could any be adequate to express our solemn pride in the heroes who sleep in all the battlefields and seas where our freedom was earned and tested. But surely sentimental tributes alone cannot exhaust the measure of our obligation to these dead. We owe them far more than the depreciated currency of elaborate rhetoric and star-spangled platitudes with which too many politicians have sought an easy payment of the nation's debt to heroes.

*"If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields."*

That was how John McCrae conceived the duty of the living to the dead; not to break faith with them, to make real the ideals for which they died.

Lincoln at Gettysburg expressed the same thought in words that may outlive the marble in which they are inscribed on the proudest tomb in the nation's capital. "It is for us the living . . . highly to resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain." Was there ever a time in our history when the challenge of Lincoln's words was more meaningful and personal than today?

If you want a biblical text for this Memorial Day, let me suggest the thirteenth verse of the first chapter of Isaiah: "Bring no more vain oblations." That verse is part of a sermon which the prophet delivered to his people early in the eighth pre-Christian century. He was exposing the vanity of their de-

¹Delivered May 29, 1943, "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

lusion that the demands of religion could be fulfilled by sacrifice alone. Ritual and burnt offering, said Isaiah, were meaningless unless they effected a transformation in the worshipper. Sacrifices that did not result in improved personal and public morality, in higher standards of conduct and a nobler way of life, were unavailing and futile. "Bring no more vain oblations."

I do not see how our generation can escape the meaning of those words. Certainly we shall be just as deluded and hypocritical as the men and women of Isaiah's time who thought they could discharge their duty to God by slaughtering animals, if we think that we can fulfill our obligation to our heroic dead by making speeches and building monuments. What we crucially require in this hour, when every dispatch from our farflung battlelines lengthens the roster of our national heroes, is the determination and dedication to justify their sacrifices. These dead must not have died in vain. How can we prevent such a ghastly futility?

We can prevent it, in the first place, by winning the war. That is the most obvious and exigent necessity we face. Unless we can bring this struggle to a decisive and victorious conclusion, every deed of gallantry in the annals of the republic, every deprivation and denial of our past and present will have been a vain oblation. In any schedule of priorities, personal or national, the winning of the war must be paramount and unchallenged.

If this microphone before me were equipped with television so that I might actually look upon this listening congregation, I fancy that I would see many of you at this point shrugging your shoulders impatiently, saying: "Why does this preacher argue so vigorously for something about which everyone agrees? Surely no American needs to be convinced that his first obligation is to help win this war in the shortest possible time." If that is what some of you out there are thinking, I beg you to take another look at what is happening among some people and groups in our country during these critical days. Is everybody in America giving the winning of the war the right of way? How about the labor leader who calls workers from their jobs in violation of his solemn non-strike pledge for the duration? Is he putting the war effort first? How about the workers who leave their shops and factories and mines in the full knowledge that the lives of our fighting men desperately depend upon them for munitions and equipment? Are they putting the war effort first? How about the industrialist or business man who still thinks in terms

of markets and dividends and profits? Is he giving the war effort the right of way? How about the congressman who is more concerned with special interests and pressure groups and his own political fate than with the fate of the nation? Is he putting the war effort first? How about the newspaper publisher who undermines public confidence in the integrity of our allies, now challenging the sincerity of England, now warning against the menace of Russia, now distorting the policies of the President, and always playing politics as usual by promoting candidates and partisan rivalries? Is he giving winning the war priority? And finally what shall we say of the disciples of bigotry who even now when Protestant, Catholic and Jew, when men of all races and creeds are offering their blood and treasure in our common defense, still stir up hatred and race prejudice and discrimination among our citizens? Are they putting the winning of the war first? What was it Jesus said?—"by their fruits shall ye know them."

I suspect that the only reason we tolerate such a situation is because of our supreme confidence in ultimate victory. That assurance is buttressed up by many pillars of faith in our vast resources of morale and enterprise and efficiency. Nevertheless we have already gone far enough in this war to realize the danger to which over-confidence can lure a people. The disaster at Pearl Harbor was accomplished by the Japanese with makeshift planes and obsolete torpedoes. Our over-confidence was responsible for that. Over-confidence cost France its liberty; the Maginot Line, they said, could never be turned. Military experts declared that it was impossible for the Germans to invade Norway by sea. Over-confidence lost Norway to the Axis. If you are listening to this sermon this afternoon at home, instead of pleasure-driving in the country in the family car you can blame over-confidence for that. They laughed at the suggestion that Detroit and Akron depended on Singapore. Lloyd George's now classic phrase "too little and too late" was born out of the circumstance that the unexpected, the unpredictable and the impossible has always happened in this war.

It is precisely at this time when, as Winston Churchill said the other day, we have reached a favorable turning point in the war, that we ought especially to guard against the temptation to be over-confident. This war is not over yet, not by a long sea-mile. Neither is the war effort being helped by people who are more devoted to their prejudices than their country. We cannot af-

ford to tolerate backyard snipers who take pot-shots at our allies and undermine the morale and security of the nation. Winning this war is incompatible with business as usual, pleasure as usual, strikes as usual, politics as usual, racial and religious bigotry as usual. Our supreme and paramount task is to win this war if the sacrifices of patriots living and dead are not to become vain oblations.

Once victory has been achieved—and God grant that it may come speedily—the second inescapable obligation that confronts us on this Memorial Day is to safeguard the fruits of victory by insuring the peace. No appeal to sentimentality can serve us here. Only the complete and sustained and thoroughgoing determination of the living, so to organize mankind that war will be forever impossible will bring this to pass. Many reasons have been offered for the collapse of the League of Nations, the failure of the Versailles Treaty, the impotence of the World Court and the frustration of the hopes that the last war would finally end all wars. In the last analysis however, it was public indifference that was responsible. It was the apathy and unconcern, the failure of the most pragmatic people on earth to take practical steps toward preventing a repetition of the First World War that was responsible for the political, social, economic and moral deterioration that culminated in the present struggle. Was there an overwhelming demonstration of public indignation or disappointment when we refused to join the League of Nations? Emphatically not. This time we dare not abate our national resolution with unfinished business on our hands. Only a thoroughly aroused national will, determined that these dead shall not have died in vain, that all these costly sacrifices shall not be vain oblations can prevent our politicians and special interest groups from sabotaging the victory and reducing it to impotent futility.

Never since this government was established has there been so great a need for Americans to consider carefully the character, the record and the political views of their senators and representatives in Congress. In all likelihood the next Congress will determine what we shall get out of this war. You fathers and mothers, whose sons have died in distant lands for liberty, shall you be indifferent to that decision? You wives and sweethearts, whose lives have been broken by the loss of your loved ones, does it mean nothing to you if your sacrifice is thrown away? You soldiers and sailors, who are offering everything you are and have upon the altar of patriotism, shall your renunciation

be made a ghastly mockery? These are solemn questions to which you alone can give the answer. If your sons and daughters are not to be conscripted twenty-five years hence to re-enact the tragedy we have on our hands today, it is up to you to see to it that your representatives in Congress safeguard the victory we shall win.

That is the challenge of this Memorial Day. That is our obligation to our heroic dead and the generations yet unborn: to press forward to victory as a united nation, welded together by a singleness of purpose.

*“Till the war-drum throbs no longer and the battle-flags are furled
In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.”*

THE NEW YEAR AND THE NAZI TERROR¹

IN common with our co-religionists throughout the world, we meet tonight to usher in a New Year. Tonight the whole House of Israel renews its pledge of loyalty to an ancient faith. This holy season offers a welcome respite from the world's clamor. Its mood is solemn and demure; its message is austere and changeless. It speaks of the responsibilities of life in accents of reverence and dignity, and invites our attention to values that are significant and abiding. Even in a generation addicted to truancy from the House of God, it evokes an inexplicable nostalgia for ancestral habits of prayer and piety. The colorful pageant of our past troops through the pages of our liturgy this night and like that fabled god of old whose strength renewed each time he touched his mother earth, something within us is quickened and fortified by this fleeting contact with the steady source of Israel's deathlessness.

To most of us, the liturgy of this day speaks a strange and difficult vocabulary. It is well-nigh impossible for our generation to recover the spirit of deep emotion with which our fathers greeted this solemn day in Israel's calendar. For them, it was in all literalness, God's Day of Judgment, and the sounds of the shofar² summoning them before the heavenly assize, smote upon their ears with awesome solemnity. With a childlike credulity that is impossible to a modern religionist, our fathers believed that on this great Day of Judgment, God surveyed the deeds of every mortal as they were recorded in His heavenly ledger, and passed sentence on each individual according to his merit. The new theories concerning the nature of reality have so profoundly revolutionized our thinking, that we can no longer attach credence to this fanciful conception. Our God-conception cannot be reconciled with such an anthropomorphic view of the Deity. In the light of present-day knowledge concerning the universe and man's relations to it, many of the positive beliefs of our fathers dissolve into the pious fantasies of a simple faith.

I would not be understood as disparaging the intense religious fervor that brought our forebears into such mystic immediacy with God. With all its limitations—and how gleefully the modern critic exposes and attacks them—that ancient faith illumined the souls of countless generations, turned weaklings into heroes, sinners into saints, and opened wide vistas of hope and courage and consolation upon lives that were lonely and barren. However

¹ Delivered on New Year's Eve, September 20, 1933.

² Ram's horn, blown in the synagogue at the services for the New Year.

impossible it may be for us today to accept its naive credulities, well may we deplore with its passing the loss of many a sound virtue and noble trait. That faith provided a social control. It filled a man with an overwhelming awareness that his behavior was constantly exposed to the all-seeing scrutiny of a Heavenly Eye, and by that token, it created a sanction for morality and a realization of social responsibility that made itself manifest in the disciplined lives of its devotees. It ill becomes the spiritual bankrupts of our generation to cavil at a piety which taught men how to meet the world's persecution and praise, hatred and honor, blame and blandishment without yielding up their integrity and self-esteem. We have scrapped that faith but we have failed to provide an effective substitute for it and as a consequence, we are today a lost generation, tragically confused between two worlds, a world that is dying, and a world that is powerless to be born.

And yet, despite the fact that it is impossible for most of us, and difficult for any of us to recapture that confident sense of intimacy with God which our fathers felt on this holy night, I believe that this year at least, we approximate it more nearly than we have in many a year. This year our seriousness and solemnity are not contingent upon our acceptance or rejection of the traditional theology. The appalling tragedy that is taking place in Germany has bowed all Israel low in sackcloth and ashes, and makes us wear the rue of this holy day with a difference. Howsoever widely we may disagree among ourselves on matters of theology and Jewish policy, our reaction of horror and grief to this frightful calamity is unanimous.

It may be that there are among you some who object to this macabre theme on a night that should be dedicated to thoughts that inspire and ennoble. I know that there are many people not lacking in kindliness and generosity of spirit who would fain close their eyes to all that is sordid and ugly in the world, and flee before the presence of tragedy as they would from a pursuing specter. I know that the story of Jewish suffering in Germany is not new to any of you. A thousand times it has been dinned into your ears. Each new dispatch from that affrighted land repeats the gruesome tale with dolorous reiteration. And yet, I would be recreant to the prophetic tradition of my calling, and faithless to every pledge of assurance and assistance I gave our persecuted brethren a few short weeks ago, did I not make their cause the dominating theme of my Rosh Hashanah message.

To one who has but recently returned from Germany, who has been an eye-witness to the terror which engulfs our stricken people, the comparative complacency and inaction of our American Jewish communities is hopelessly incomprehensible. Here is a population of 600,000 of our fellow-Jews, bound to us by every sacred claim of tradition and fellowship and humanity, that has been stripped of civic rights hard-earned and dearly-purchased, expropriated from all trades, professions, and opportunities for earning a livelihood, condemned as a cancerous growth to be excised and destroyed, humiliated and degraded to such ignominy that self-destruction is accepted as an honorable escape. Every new intelligence that seeps through the rigorous censorship confirms our worst fears that the situation daily grows more ominous. The steady and determined advance of the anti-Semitic juggernaut continues on its path of destruction and schrecklichkeit, unchecked by a single restraining influence. The British Jews have raised large sums for relief and reconstruction. Our French and Dutch co-religionists have taxed themselves heroically. American Jewry has contributed far beyond its means—emotionally. This much cannot be denied; our contribution of sympathy has been practically unlimited.

Unless a man is content to grope through life aimlessly, he will seek meanings in the experiences which come to him. The old adage that experience is the best teacher, holds true only for those who digest their apperceptions and try to make some sense out of their experiences. The thoughtful person will seek to discover the relevancy to his own life of those events in which he engages or of which he is a spectator. What is happening in Germany today is vitally significant in many directions. For the moment, let us consider the effect of Nazi anti-Semitism on German Jewry and the American Jewish community.

I

As far as German Jewry is concerned, its lot is hopeless. The Nazi government, with a display of efficiency and enthusiasm which one might well wish had been devoted to a more worthy purpose, has effectively executed every sadistic item in its program of anti-Semitism. When some day the whole frightful tale is told, the story will constitute one of the most lurid chapters in the history of man's inhumanity to man. Wherever in the centuries to

come men shall recount the foul deeds that stain the record of human progress, there Hitler shall be damned to immortality.

German Jewry, like Israel of old over whose mangled body Amos sang his plaintive lament, lies prostrate and fallen. Its once thriving industries are shattered, its brilliant professional life is extinguished, its wealth confiscated, its influence destroyed, its opportunity annihilated. The illustrious contributions of its men of letters feed flames around which hooligans dance and caper. The chairs of learning and the seats of science once nobly held by Jewish savants whose genius lit a torch of knowledge that illumined the world, now groan beneath the weight of rationalized insult and racial infamy that masquerades under the highfaluting name of Nordic anthropology. Little children, strangers to the bestial depths of human nature, have been taught to drain the dregs of degradation, or schooled in the ingenuities of persecution. So thoroughly has the Jewish position in Germany been undermined and demolished, and so completely has the German national attitude been molded by prejudice and hostility, that there is no further hope for German Jewry. Even were Hitler to fall tomorrow, the situation would not be altered. When they tore down Heine's statue and promised a niche in the Hall of Fame to the assassin of Einstein, they repudiated the last great gifts of Jewish genius and signed the doom of 600,000 Jews in the handwriting of the dark ages.

I cannot claim originality for these conclusions. Although I reached them quite independently on the basis of my own observation and investigation, they are shared by the leaders of German Jewry and by impartial, trained observers who have visited Germany. As to how German Jewry will specifically solve its problem, only prophets of unimpeachable irresponsibility can predict. At the present time, however, this much seems fairly certain: the more fortunate thousands will emigrate and the more miserable hundreds of thousands will be killed, or shunted off into social if not actual ghettos, condemned to degradation by a constant stigma of inferiority.

II

What are the implications of this tragedy for us as American Jews? What measures can we take to assist our stricken brethren without further jeopardizing their safety?

To begin with, there is the elementary duty to contribute as generously as

our means permit to the alleviation of their physical suffering. Up to the present time, the niggardliness of American Jewry in this crisis has been appalling. Our greatest contribution has been in terms of sympathy, invective, and protest mass-meetings which, so far as the German people are concerned, constitute the surest form of secrecy. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which is the sole organization working in conjunction with the British and French relief societies for the purpose of administering relief funds, has been vainly endeavoring these past six months to raise \$2,000,000 for the salvaging of German Jewry. Up to the present time, it has secured barely half that sum. Here in San Francisco, our own appeal conducted in conjunction with the Jewish National Welfare Fund drive, took place before the full extent of the tragedy was known. Now that all the frightful details have been disclosed and the appalling need made overabundantly manifest, there is no longer justification for delay or parsimony. The very least we can do is to protect this proud and heroic element in Jewry from the ravages of famine, disease, and destitution, and to make it possible for some of them to escape from the living hell of Germany into the free atmosphere of other lands.

In the second place, no Jew should have to be admonished against lending aid and comfort to Germany by the purchase of German-manufactured products, or the patronage of German-owned industries and services. For any Jew to contribute a single dollar, even a single penny to the prosperity of a government and a nation that not only reviles and persecutes its own Jewish citizens, but carries on a well-organized campaign of hatred and vilification against all Jews in every land, is to subsidize one's own degradation.

Do you recall the bitter eloquence that Shakespeare puts into the mouth of the merchant of Venice when his persecutor comes to solicit his patronage:

*"You call me misbeliever, cut throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gabardine . . .
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit."*

What shall our answer be to this nation of paranoiacs that solicits our patronage to underwrite the annihilation of our brethren?

*"Shall we bend low and in a bondsman's key
With bated breath, and whispering humbleness say this:
'Fair sirs, you slaughtered eighty Jews on Wednesday last,
Three thousand more you drove in concentration camps,
Destroyed their livelihoods, profaned the graves
Where sleep their noble and heroic dead.
Another time you slammed the gates of hate
Against our children innocent of wrong.
And constantly you foul the press and air
With lying Nazi libels hatched in hell,
And for these courtesies we'll buy your goods,
Sail on your ships, and help your coffers grow
To speed the cruel extinction of our race.'"*

Clearly, the present German government has not been deterred from its anti-Semitic policy by the spokesmen for outraged public opinion in other lands. The usual techniques of non-aggression and peaceful persuasion have all been tried to no avail. *It remains to be seen whether the symbols of economics written in red ink on German ledgers will be more persuasive.*

To those who oppose the boycott on the ground that it will lead to serious repercussions upon German Jewry, my considered reply is that if Hitler can succeed in maintaining German trade and industry and in restoring German prosperity, that triumph will be interpreted at home and abroad as justification of his policies and as proof conclusive of the soundness of his statesmanship. In that event, nothing could prevent the fulfillment of every anti-Semitic plank in the Nazi platform.

III

Finally, we cannot overlook the sinister implications which Hitlerism holds for American Jewry. I have already alluded to the fact, vouched for by leaders of American Jewry and other reliable authorities, that the Nazi government has appropriated millions of dollars for foreign propaganda. Much of this money is being spent in America. Anti-Semitic magazines, pamphlets and broadsides are springing up all over the land with disconcerting rapidity, and finding an avid reading public among hundreds of thousands of potential anti-

Semites. I would not for a moment exaggerate this menace or even dignify it by reference from this pulpit, were it not for the circumstance that what was deemed impossible in Germany less than a year ago has now become a tragic fact. A social plague like a pestilence cannot be confined to the locale of its origin. It overleaps all artificial boundaries, traverses oceans and sweeps across the world.

What shall be our reply to the anti-Semite? It is useless to appeal to reason. It is vain to trust in persuasion. It is despicable to grovel in submission. May I suggest that the only effective reply at our command to the attacks upon our integrity, is that afforded by the dignity of our lives and the rectitude of our bearing. I would have every Jew realize that his conduct and behavior, his business ethics and personal morality are much more than his private concern. What he says and what he does, how he lives and earns and spends, are matters which affect not only his individual life but involve the reputation and standing of the entire Jewish community. Whether we like it or not is beside the point. The world insists upon judging us collectively, and although we may proclaim from the housetops Burke's dictum that you cannot indict a whole people, our protestations will avail us naught. Every Jew must recognize his social responsibility toward his fellow-Jews and guard the honor of his people more dearly than his own.

It is well known to students of marine life that the wounded oyster mends his shell with a pearl. So Jewish life has always emerged from each encounter with intolerance ennobled and regenerated. Let us pray that the new year may witness a new birth of Jewish loyalty and affirmation in every Jewish heart throughout the world; that the reign of hatred and violence may speedily pass away; but if endure it must, it shall find us not wanting in that inner spiritual strength which triumphs over disaster and adversity and leads to life's greatest victories.

ONE REFORM RABBI REPLIES TO LUDWIG LEWISOHN¹

IN this time of great crisis for so many of our co-religionists it is neither pleasant nor edifying for Jews to engage in partisan controversy. We ought to postpone that luxury, so dear to the hearts of our highly individualistic and passionately disputative people at least until such time as the contemporary pressure of the world's hostility has been lifted. In the face of the incredible persecutions occurring in Germany and Eastern Europe, considering the heroic efforts being made in Palestine to rehabilitate our friendless exiles, in the light of the urgent sacrifices demanded of American Jewry for the redemption of our captives, it would seem not only sensible but imperative in the highest degree for the Jew to formulate and pursue two fundamental policies to meet this situation: first, to avoid by all honorable means adding to the weight of Israel's burdens, and second, to achieve and foster a singleness of purpose in alleviating the distress of our brethren.

The current issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* contains an article by Ludwig Lewisohn entitled "Jews in Trouble" which does not contribute to either of these objectives. Mr. Lewisohn has seen fit to wheel the sick Jewish member of our world-society into the clinic of public opinion and subject him to another painful literary vivisection. With a pontifical assurance that would be amusing if the situation of the Jew were not so parlous, but which in the present state of Jewish affairs is both dangerous and irritating, he has taken it upon himself to diagnose the malady of the patient and to proclaim the only panacea for its healing. Nor is this all. By the adroit use of that literary skill and verbal dexterity which has deservedly placed him in the front ranks of American authors, Mr. Lewisohn manages to convey the impression, even more, the conviction, that he is a certified spokesman for American Jewry and is enunciating opinions in which the overwhelming majority of his fellow Jews vociferously concur. I propose this morning to review his article with you and inquire whether such is really the case.

He begins by saying that Jews are in difficulty. In Germany, Poland, Austria and throughout Eastern Europe they are being "crunched into dust under an iron heel." What is worse, they are a people trapped; they have neither the wherewithal to flee nor lands of welcome that would receive them. What is the explanation for their tragic plight? The current theories of anti-Semitism are invariably counterfeit. The menace of Jewish unity is mythic and fantastic.

¹ Delivered Saturday morning, January 11, 1936.

Our reputed wealth is sheer fiction; we are a poor people. We have some noisy Communists but their number is negligible; we are a bourgeois group. Two facts account for anti-Jewish prejudice: the first is that we are a minority and as a consequence, a handy and vulnerable target; and the second, our refusal to accept Christianity while at the same time upholding values to which Christendom gives only lip service, makes us a living reproach to the Gentiles.

These two factors in Jewish history, Mr. Lewisohn argues, constitute the basis of Christian antipathy. To compensate for the degradation visited upon us we clung fiercely to our law and way of life. Finally, but too late, we were emancipated by the nations of the Western world, but there was a catch in the arrangement. The price asked of us was nothing less than the renunciation of Judaism, the price of being Jews no more. "And it was a price," says Mr. Lewisohn, "which, profoundly as they often desired to do so, they could no longer pay. They tried to pay it. They lived for their new fatherlands and, pretending to themselves (*sic*) to share the martial spirit of those lands, died for them on all the battlefields of modern wars. But they remained Jews." Hence the startling conclusion, "assimilation as a method of adjustment is bankrupt." Moreover, continues Mr. Lewisohn, the world was never sincere in its desire to have the Jew assimilated. It insisted that he disappear, and that he cannot do. Hence the Jewish problem.

Having thus sought to establish his thesis on historical grounds, Mr. Lewisohn reaches the crux of his argument. Zionism affords the only solution of the Jewish problem. Only a Jewish nation in Palestine can normalize the condition of the Jew who is in exile "since it would give to him, as to the emigrant Swede or Dane or Finn, a moral status other than that of an utterly homeless suppliant at hostile thresholds." All history and all experience, says the author, fortify this conclusion. At this point Mr. Lewisohn lapses into intemperate language. "Those who oppose the movement," he cries, "are betrayers of the cause, the hope and the very life of Israel. The Jews who are permitted to speak loudly and conspicuously in America, with the at least tacit implication that they speak for their people, speak in all sober fact for small eccentric groups or for their isolated, sterile selves." So at last we have a phrase to describe the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the American Jewish Committee—"small eccentric groups," whose leaders are "isolated, sterile" personalities!

But the concluding paragraphs of the article make one wonder why Mr. Lewisohn is so vehement. Why flog a dead horse so energetically? For, according to him, Zionism has few opponents. "The Jewish people is overwhelmingly Zionist today," he declares, and marshals astonishing statistics to support the statement. Zionism is an impressive sign of the essential solidarity of the Jewish people in this age. "American Jewry," announces Mr. Lewisohn, finally and emphatically, "is overwhelmingly Zionist or pro-Zionist today." And, crowning triumph of all, "the leaders of the Reform rabbinate are all active Zionists." Mr. Lewisohn has apparently not discovered a single exception (or conscientious scruple) which might grudgingly compel him even to qualify that declaration. In his next sentence, however, he makes a slight concession to caution. "With rapidly disappearing exceptions," he gloats, hedging reluctantly, "the conspicuous Reform pulpits are occupied by Zionists." Even the newly elected president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis is a Zionist. In short, concludes Mr. Lewisohn, in a fanfare of triumph which rises in an exulting crescendo to a deafening hallelujah, "American Jewry is Zionist in spirit throughout all its strata . . . The Jewish people as a people is Zionist," because Zionism is the "instrument not only of its political but of its spiritual salvation."

I said at the outset that it is not a pleasant task, in the light of the tragedy of our people today, to be compelled to join combat in the kind of controversy that Mr. Lewisohn is seeking. Our people needs the undivided energies, not only of its leaders and spokesmen, but of its inarticulate masses, in the many difficult situations that it faces at home and abroad. None have been more earnestly committed to a policy of benevolent neutrality with respect to Zionism than have Reform Jewish rabbis and lay leaders during these recent trying years. If we speak now it is only because Mr. Lewisohn's statements must not be permitted to pass unchallenged, for at least three reasons. In the first place, they do not represent the views of the overwhelming majority of American Reform Jews. In the second place, they draw a distorted conception for the Christian of the attitude of the American Jew on the question of national loyalty. And finally, Mr. Lewisohn has been guilty either of deliberate misrepresentation or a subtle mishandling of facts.

Mr. Lewisohn proclaims that American Jewry is overwhelmingly Zionist today. One has a right to inquire how he came by that information. Is it not

just barely possible that he has been unwittingly betrayed into this comfortable conviction by his crusading return to Judaism—after a long self-confessed truancy—through the door of Zionism? Moreover, is it not at least within the bounds of possibility that he has mistaken noise for numbers and may therefore be guilty of pardonable error, considering the unremitting fecundity and articulate ingenuity and relentless clamor of Zionist propaganda? As far as authentic records go, the Jews of America (or of the world for that matter) have never taken a vote on the question. The Zionists, to be sure, do hold periodic elections at designated polling places throughout the country and the world, where they register their preferences for delegates to Zionist conventions. Mr. Lewisohn quotes the statistics of the last Zionist elections. As evidence of the overwhelming Zionist sentiment in the world, he produces figures to show that 1,930,000 voters elected delegates to the World Zionist Congress and the Revisionist Congress held last year. Those figures are profoundly impressive but just as profoundly inflated. *The New Palestine*, in its issue of September 13, 1935, publishes the statement of Dr. Sammy Groveman, the president of the Zionist Court, who presented to the Zionist Congress at Lucerne the report on the actual number of votes cast throughout the world. His figure is not 1,930,000 but 634,000. Just a trifling error of about 1,300,000 on the part of Mr. Lewisohn! Of course the actual vote in itself indicates considerable Zionist sentiment, but if Mr. Lewisohn were more honest than partisan and had analyzed only the American vote, as I shall presently do, he would have been obliged to modify his conclusions.

In its issue of June 28th *The New Palestine* published the results of the American elections. For weeks Zionists had been bombarded with persuasive and unremitting propaganda urging them to ballot. The issues had been hotly debated, the party lines clearly drawn. One would think, to read Mr. Lewisohn's description of the vigorous and militant and overwhelming Zionist sentiment in American Jewry, that the vote would have reflected this ardor. What does the official record actually show? In New Orleans, where there are 9,000 Jews,¹ 86 votes were cast. In Dallas, with a Jewish population of over 8,000, 89 votes were cast. In Chicago, where there are more than 300,000 Jews, 6,260 voted. Even in New York, the headquarters of the Zionist organization of America,

¹ The Jewish population statistics are those reported in the "American Jewish Year Book, 1935-36."

with the largest orthodox Jewish population of any city in the world, and where the Zionist propaganda had been sustained and intense, out of a total Jewish population of over a million and three-quarters, only 10,471 votes were cast. And in San Francisco the overwhelming Zionist loyalty of our community (according to Mr. Lewisohn) with its 38,000 Jews, was registered in some 100 to 150 votes. (The secretary of the local organization was unable to furnish the exact figure.) Out of a total Jewish population in America of four-and-a-half-million, 50,862 votes had been cast. Yet, on the basis of this plebiscite, Mr. Lewisohn has the literary audacity to tell the world, especially the cultured Christian world that reads *The Atlantic Monthly*, that all American Jewry is "overwhelmingly and emphatically and finally Zionist!"

To be sure, he speaks much more meekly in the presence of informed Zionists. In his intimate family circle, one detects none of that braggadocio and dogmatism which characterize the article he wrote for Christian consumption. *The New Palestine* of June 28th publishes a letter over Mr. Lewisohn's signature. He wrote it to defend himself against a charge, in an earlier issue of that same journal, that at a New England Zionist convention he had talked "pleasant cultural inutilities." In that letter Mr. Lewisohn does not seem so confident of Zionist strength, in fact he bewails its weakness. I quote him: "To build up Eretz Israel we need moral and political power. . . . We must be able to go to Mandatory Power and League of Nations with our mandate . . . from the still free and influential Jewries of the English speaking world. . . . Why can we not do that? Why are our numbers (though happily growing) still so paltry? We need propaganda. We need vital propaganda. We need to convert the Jews of America and of the world . . . conversion of Jews is the most urgent political act of this day. We wail over our feebleness . . . *a World Congress elected by far less than a million votes is one thing. A Congress elected by five million votes would speak with quite another authority for the Jewish people and to mankind.*"

That was what Mr. Lewisohn said to his fellow Zionists, but for purposes of that propaganda which he champions he is apparently quite ready to distort the realities of the situation. I am afraid he cannot have it both ways. He cannot bewail the weakness of Zionism and urge the desperate necessity of converting the Jews of America and the world to it in the columns of the official Zionist organ, and then stand up in the columns of *The Atlantic Monthly* (be-

fore an audience that does not know the facts) and boast of the irresistible and ubiquitous and overwhelming Zionist strength in America. He cannot quite correctly deplore the totally unrepresentative character of a World Congress elected by a million votes and plead for five million in *The New Palestine* and then, when the election returns show that *not even* one million votes have been cast—634,000, to be exact—he cannot tell the readers of *The Atlantic Monthly* that the Zionists have a mandate to speak in the name of world Jewry and expect to get away with it. In the light of these facts one is tempted to quote Mr. Lewisohn to Mr. Lewisohn: “The Jews who are permitted to speak loudly and conspicuously in America with the at least tacit implication that they speak for other people, speak in all sober fact for small eccentric groups or for their isolated, sterile selves.”

Mr. Lewisohn is guilty of a still more flagrant distortion of fact when he asserts that the leaders of the Reform rabbinate today are all active Zionists. To be sure, if Mr. Lewisohn sets himself up as a court of last resort to select those men in the rabbinate whom he considers the leading Reform rabbis, one can only quarrel with his judgment or be amused at his quibbling. What does the record show? The Central Conference of American Rabbis is the only national Reform rabbinical association in America. From the time it was founded in 1889 by Isaac M. Wise down to the present day, with one exception every official declaration of the Central Conference of American Rabbis on the question of Zionism has been in opposition to it. The one exception occurred at the last meeting of the Conference. Let no one minimize the significance of that one exception; some of the most unyielding anti-Zionists in the Conference are too proud of it to have it glossed over, even as most of our militant Zionist colleagues are too chivalrous to have its implications distorted. At the last convention in Chicago a resolution was adopted to the effect that “the Conference takes no official stand on the subject of Zionism” and “the acceptance or rejection of the Zionist program be left to the determination of the individual members of the Conference.” That resolution was passed in a spirit of fair play to the Zionist minority. Non-Zionists voted for it, your rabbi included, not because of sympathy with Zionism, but because we felt that it was high time to abandon the unfair and arbitrary attitude which had too long prevailed in the Conference whereby the anti-Zionist majority forced its views down the throats of our Zionist minority colleagues. If anyone doubts this

interpretation of the resolution, the record shows that a substitute motion that "Zionism is not incompatible with Reform Judaism" was lost.

Mr. Lewisohn makes much of the fact that the new president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis is a Zionist. Rabbi Levy was elected not because he is a Zionist, but in spite of it. A non-Zionist nominating committee nominated him; non-Zionist votes elected him unanimously. Rabbi Levy acknowledged this fact in his address of acceptance when he correctly stated that his election reflected the "sense of fair play" in the Conference. The Conference has nine honorary members, rabbis who have distinguished themselves in America and England by their scholarship, eloquence and leadership. Every one of those nine honorary members is opposed to Zionism. To be sure there are many Zionist rabbis in the Conference; some of its most brilliant and eloquent members are leaders in the Zionist movement. But to say, as Mr. Lewisohn does, that "with rapidly disappearing exceptions the conspicuous Reform pulpits are occupied by Zionists," makes one wonder how Mr. Lewisohn defines conspicuous. Obviously he suffers from severe myopia when he looks in the direction of prominent pulpits whose occupants are non-Zionists. Temple Emanu-El in New York is generally considered the leading Jewish pulpit in America. Samuel Goldenson, its rabbi, is an uncompromising anti-Zionist. Samuel Schulman, his predecessor, the rabbi emeritus, likewise. The Hebrew Union College is the oldest and most representative seminary in America and in the world for the education of Reform rabbis. Its president, Julian Morgenstern, is an unequivocal anti-Zionist. Philipson of Cincinnati, Jonah Wise of New York, Rosenau in Baltimore, Wolsey and Fineshriber in Philadelphia, Simon in Washington, Calisch in Richmond, Franklin in Detroit, Lefkowitz in Dallas, Ettelson in Memphis, Levi and Mann in Chicago, Foster in Newark, Frisch in San Antonio, Newfield in Birmingham, Koch in Seattle—one might extend the list until it includes every past president of the Central Conference and outstanding rabbis in every section of the country—how disappointed these men will be to discover that Ludwig Lewisohn has dismissed them in a phrase from their occupancy of America's distinguished pulpits!

Mr. Lewisohn has either deliberately misconstrued or possibly is unfamiliar with the reasons that have prompted the non-Zionist Reform rabbis of America to declare a moratorium on their hostility to Zionism. During the last few

years Reform rabbis have been more deeply concerned in salvaging our persecuted brethren than in engaging in acrimonious polemics over Zionism. Realizing that Palestine today offers the greatest haven of refuge from persecution for German and Polish refugees, we have submerged our antipathy to Zionism in the interests of promoting the economic, cultural and particularly the spiritual welfare of Palestine. That attitude is reflected in recent resolutions of the Conference. Nor has this point of view obtained only among Reform rabbis. Prominent non-Zionist laymen, among them the late Louis Marshall and Julius Rosenwald of blessed memory, and Felix Warburg and Paul Baerwald, and all the distinguished non-Zionist members of the Jewish Agency (including Judge Sloss of this city) have come to the assistance of Palestine without in the slightest compromising with or whittling down their opposition to Jewish nationalism. Now I submit that it is one thing to be pro-Palestine in the sense of adopting a benevolent attitude toward the land which is proving an island in a tempestuous sea of persecution, and quite another thing to be a militant Jewish nationalist persuaded that the only solution of the Jewish problem is the creation of a Jewish State.

The Zionists officially recognize this fundamental cleavage between the groups that are assisting them throughout the world. The slogans of the Zionist Organization of America have been "Palestine without Parties" and "Palestine as a Place of Refuge." They frequently and openly interpret party membership in devious ways, best calculated to attract the support of dissenting groups or individuals. Thus, for instance, Mr. Abraham Goldberg, a member of the Governing Council of the Zionist Organization of America, says quite bluntly, "We strive to enroll as Zionists all groups of people by carrying on a propaganda particularly suited to each group." So it happens that in this very congregation there are women who, though repudiating completely the Zionist nationalist ideology, are nevertheless members of Hadassah. The magnificent work which that fine body of women is doing in Palestine—its health program and child-care projects and social service efforts—commands their admiration and they want to help it. Very properly Zionists seek to enlist the aid of all Jews in the up-building of the new Palestine. Moreover, they realize that many Jews who contribute to Hadassah and the general Zionist organization are prompted not by Zionist convictions but by humanitarian considerations. That goes a long way toward explaining why

although 130,000 individuals in America were entitled to vote in the last Zionist elections, as a matter of actual fact only about 50,000 votes were cast. *The New Palestine*, Zionism's official organ, commented editorially on the election as follows: "When all is said and done the record is the index of a defeat, and we are forced to the conclusion—when the entire field is surveyed, making allowances for irregularities, . . . that large numbers of our members, and especially of Hadassah, *are lacking in interest in largely Zionist affairs.*" There you have it! The Zionist organization today is supported by thousands of Jews who do not share its nationalist ideology or political creed and whose only interest is the up-building of a secure home for those Jews who are driven or want to live there.

Time does not permit me to correct a number of misstatements, understatements and over-statements which Mr. Lewisohn has made. Thus, for instance, when he says that American Jews have not "a single highly articulate friend like the late Lord Balfour and Josiah Wedgewood in England or Justin Godard in France or Jan Smuts in South Africa, who thoroughly understands our plight," we are prompted to remind him that no living Christian is a more understanding friend of Israel or has done more to focus world opinion upon the Jewish tragedy than the American who just resigned as High Commissioner for Refugees, James G. McDonald. Nor, may we add, has Newton D. Baker, of the National Conference of Jews and Christians, hesitated again and again to remind America and the world of the inhuman persecutions of Israel.

Again, we must overlook Mr. Lewisohn's zeal when he rhapsodizes over "Israel-land where we have taken upon ourselves the yoke of the Law." If my reading of Jewish history is correct, Israel took upon itself the yoke of the Law, not in Palestine, but in the wilderness at Mount Sinai, and by far the greater part of its deathless and distinguished contribution to world culture was produced, not in Palestine, but in Babylon and the lands of the Dispersion. Moreover, much as we sympathize with Mr. Lewisohn's disillusionment over the unfulfilled promises of the emancipation, it simply is not true that "the most assimilated Jew, himself in Europe often born of baptized parents, *always* remains a Jew by the character of his special relation to time and beauty, to love and peace, to man and God." Romantic propaganda but inaccurate history! Occasionally apostate Jews do reveal their origin by the quality of

their living and their inescapable nostalgia for Jewish values, but more frequently they are swallowed up in the social churning of our metropolitan centers, in Christian Science churches and Protestant churches and Catholic churches, and their children and grandchildren are thus forever lost to Judaism.

And so one might go on and point out other inaccuracies, and even logical fallacies, in Mr. Lewisohn's article, if time permitted and one did not have to speak with self-imposed restraint. The builders of Palestine must not be made the innocent victims of our resentment against their literary misrepresentatives.

One wonders what the Gentile world makes of all this. It is notorious that anti-Semites, when other arguments fail, sometimes succeed in prejudicing even friendly Christians against the Jew by quoting this type of nationalist propaganda to convict us out of our own mouths for being a nationality imbedded within a nation. There is too dangerous a parallel between the insistence of some Zionist spokesmen upon nationality and race and blood, and similar pronouncements by Fascist leaders in European dictatorships. Some types of propaganda may prove too tragically successful for our comfort. If we succeed in teaching America that Jews regard themselves as a nation and that, to quote Mr. Lewisohn, Zionism is the only instrument of our political salvation, we may live to regret it.

Last summer, at the World Zionist Congress in Lucerne, an American rabbi stood before the Congress and said this: "To use a bit of American slang, we are not *asking* the world, we are *telling* it. We are not *asking questions* of the world, we are *giving answers*. We are not *inviting decisions* by the nations, we are apprising the nations of our decisions." No swashbuckling, saber-rattling German Nazi or Japanese jingo, contemptuously defiant of world opinion, ever used more provocative language than that. It would appear that Jewish piety has yielded to Jewish truculence. As though the world could be intimidated by such bombast! That speech was delivered on August 27th. Three weeks later, on September 15th, the German Reichstag degraded the Jews to the status of serfs.

Speaking as a Reform rabbi, and voicing the convictions of organized Reform Judaism in America as expressed again and again in its official bodies, the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American He-

brew Congregations, I repudiate Mr. Lewisohn's gratuitous assumption that most Reform Jews consider themselves Jewish nationals, and I reject his Zionist political philosophy. Our political nationalism is American. We deny that Israel is a nation in any modern sense of the term, but a socio-religious community only, sharing a common historic continuity with Jews in all the countries of the world. I do not believe that as American Jews our political salvation lies in Palestine. On the contrary, I denounce this secularism which seems to dominate the thinking of so many nationalist Jews as alien to the historic traditions of Israel. I believe firmly that this new heresy is irrelevant, misleading, and that it is fraught with grave danger to our position in the Western world.

And yet, despite Mr. Lewisohn, I do not propose to relinquish my interest in Palestine. No Jew should refuse to work even with those who differ from him, for the welfare of suffering Israel. But Judaism, the religion of Israel, and not Zionism, the politics of Palestine, is our chief and abiding concern. Our destiny is to be the teachers of religion and the witnesses of God to a humanity that gropes in darkness. The claims of our secular nationalists today would astound Israel's ancient prophets if they could miraculously reappear on earth. Jewish states may rise and fall, as they have risen and fallen in the past; the people of Israel will continue to minister at the altar of the Most High God in all the lands in which they dwell.

This sermon should never have had to be preached. In deference to the circumstances which projected it, it was unavoidable. Our rabbis tell the story of three men who went out together in a row-boat. In midstream one of them started to bore a hole in the bottom of the boat. His friends remonstrated with him. "Mind your own business," he snapped back. "I am boring this hole under my own seat." "But don't you see," they replied, "that the water will come in and drown us all?"

I charge Mr. Lewisohn with having unfairly presented the position of the American Jew to the American people. I accuse Mr. Lewisohn of sabotaging that Jewish unity of which he speaks by forcing Reform rabbis who are in sympathy with Palestine into a position where they are compelled publicly to re-debate the issue of Zionism. I accuse Mr. Lewisohn of injuring the Zionist movement by provoking a controversy over Zionism when all of us, Zionists and non-Zionists alike, Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and unsynagogued,

should be straining our constant and united efforts toward making Palestine increasingly available as a refuge for our persecuted brethren.

Let me conclude with a quotation from the address delivered at the World Zionist Congress last August by Dr. Nahum Sokolow, the retiring president of that distinguished body. Replying to critics of the Zionist organization by whom his administration was accused of "not having beaten the big drum often or loudly enough" in an effort to hasten the process of re-building in Palestine, Doctor Sokolow declared that these people have "a superstitious confidence in the utility and infallible efficacy of making a noise. The hot-heads who dilate in so partisan a spirit are unwilling to comprehend that . . . only by wise moderation and stoic self-restraint shall we succeed step by step in protecting and advancing our work, in peacefully overcoming a long-standing opposition."

I recommend to Mr. Lewisohn that he ponder this excellent advice, and to my fellow Jews everywhere, regardless of their Zionist sympathies or antipathies, the privilege and duty of helping generously to make and keep Palestine a land of freedom for Jews in trouble.

WHERE DO YOU STAND?¹

YOM KIPPUR is the most solemn day in Israel's religious calendar. This year especially, in a world at war, it brings home to us with fearful hardship and heavy sacrifice, the penalty we must pay for personal and national transgression. We have been guilty of violating God's moral law and must suffer the consequences in suffering and sorrow. That is how the law of compensation works in society. No amount of praying or fasting can save us from the penalty of our stupidity, our wilfulness, and our selfishness. Any Jew who thinks otherwise on this Yom Kippur is pathetically ill-advised. He will be disillusioned in the still more terrible days that lie before us. Let us be realistic about this. Sin is rebellion against God, and never goes unpunished. Nations as well as individuals are subject to this universal law.

Personal responsibility is sharply emphasized in the ritual for this Atonement Day. God does not judge us collectively. Before His tribunal, every man is lifted out of the protective anonymity of the group, and held to strict accountability for his decisions and actions. This holy day reminds us that we are responsible as individuals, not only for our personal behavior, but for the conduct of the group of which we are a part.

Now in any year, a rabbi faces a very grave responsibility in deciding what message he shall bring his people on a night like this. He is haunted by the realization that at no other time will he face so large and so representative a gathering of his congregation, in so earnest a mood. And this year that decision has been much more difficult than ordinarily. In such a world as we confront, in such an age when the cumulative iniquity of many decades is being expiated on global battle-fields; when the problems facing Israel abroad and at home were never before so urgent and complex, so bewildering and crucial, it has been necessary to choose a subject for discussion tonight with critical and prayerful discrimination from a list of important priorities. In the all too inadequate time at our disposal, let me invite you to consider with me a theme which—next to the winning of the war—I hold to be of transcendent and paramount importance to American and world Jewry: a subject in the determination of which every one of us bears an immediate and deep personal responsibility: "What shall be the status of the Jew in the post-war world?" Let none of us admit to indifference on that question. Depend upon it, no

¹ Delivered on the eve of Atonement Day, October 8, 1943.

more serious issue will face us as Jews during our lifetime and the lives of our children.

I suspect that it is not necessary for me to remind you that this question has been the most prominent single issue before the American Jewish community during the past year. It has headed the agenda of every important Jewish meeting in our land. It has filled the columns of the English-Jewish press and overflowed into the news and advertising sections of the daily newspapers. It has been discussed guardedly in Pullman smokers, argued vigorously in drawing-rooms, shouted violently in metropolitan auditoriums, and thundered imperiously into continental microphones. It is the rock upon which American Jewry has been cleft into two distinct and determined groups. Let us try, without heat or animus, and above all, without recourse to the intemperate and abusive language which has most unfortunately constituted the major vocabulary of the debate, to present the opposing views of the two schools of thought on this question.

We begin with the views of the Jewish nationalists. They are organized in a society known as the Zionist Organization of America. It has been in existence for forty-six years, has local chapters throughout the country, and is extremely active, articulate and militant. At the annual Zionist convention held in Columbus, Ohio, last month, the official membership was announced as 67,000¹. In addition, there is a Zionist Youth Group and the Women's Zionist Organization of America, known as Hadassah, both of them auxiliaries of the parent organization.

The program of the Jewish nationalists for the Jews in the post-war world is simply stated. It was summarized at the recent American Jewish Conference in New York by their most brilliant orator, the very able Co-Chairman of the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver. Said Rabbi Silver, "There is but one solution to our national homelessness, which is the source of our millennial tragedy, and that is a national home." Palestine, of course, is to be the Jewish State. It is to be autonomous, with its own Jewish army, navy, and all the implementation of a modern sovereign national state. But since there are presently over a million Arabs in Palestine as against less than half a million Jews², how is this to be accomplished? The

¹ See *The New Palestine*, September 24, 1943, p. 3.

² *American Jewish Year Book*, 1943.

Zionists propose that Great Britain turn over to the Jewish Agency the sole control and direction of immigration into Palestine.

At this point it is highly important to bear in mind that the program for the re-establishment of the Jewish State is no longer to be regarded as a philanthropic or humanitarian enterprise. This may be startling to many American Jews who have hitherto cooperated with the project through powerful humanitarian motives: the eager desire to provide a place of refuge for bitterly persecuted and harassed European Jews. Rabbi Silver was very emphatic on this new orientation of Zionist principles. In his closing address, which was described by many as the climax of the Conference, and a masterpiece of oratory, he made this declaration, underscoring it as the only point he wished to make. I quote: "If we rely solely on the refugee-philanthropic appeal," he said, "we shall lose our case as well as do violence to the historic hopes of our people. On the basis of sheer philanthropy, of satisfying pressing immigration needs, Palestine has already done its full share for Jewish refugees. . . . It is because Palestine is *the Jewish Homeland* that we have the right to insist upon unrestricted immigration."¹ Nothing could be plainer or more frankly unequivocal. American Jewry is now asked to support the Zionist aims, not on the basis of providing an asylum for refugees from persecution, but definitely and unqualifiedly upon political grounds.

Moreover, the Zionist claims regarding the solidarity of American Jewry behind this political program are formidable and serious. Rabbi Israel Goldstein, who has just been elected president of the Zionist Organization of America, summarized in his inaugural address last month, the articles of faith which Zionists hold in common. "No Jew," he declared, "is a normal Jew who is not a Zionist." Furthermore, "Judaism as a religion," he continued, "is colorless and without personality unless it is informed by Zionist content."² And Judge Louis E. Levinthal, the retiring president of the Zionist organization, in the annual message which he delivered to the Columbus convention, made this very grave and dogmatic declaration. I quote: "We have claimed that Zionist ideals and aspirations are shared by nearly all American Jews. That claim has now been substantiated." To be sure, Judge Levinthal did not presume to base such a sweeping and categorical statement upon the figures

¹ *The New Palestine*, September 10, 1943. p. 6.

² *The New Palestine*, September 24, 1943. p. 5.

submitted to the convention, which disclosed that the total Zionist membership in America is 67,000 out of more than five million Jews. What he was referring to, was the resolution on Jewish nationalism, recently passed at the American Jewish Conference in New York, which claimed to be a democratically elected legislative body empowered to speak authoritatively for the entire Jewish community of the United States. The temptation is great to challenge that claim. I shall only do so now to the extent of saying that from start to finish that New York Conference was deliberately organized and set up in a way to guarantee complete Zionist control at every point. At no time throughout the entire proceedings was discussion permitted from the floor; the resolution on Jewish nationalism was never even submitted to the most important committee of the Conference, the General Committee, which contained a number of prominent non-Zionists. And if further commentary on the democratic and representative character of this assembly is required, an assembly which claims to have honestly and authoritatively represented the Jews of the United States of America, it is only necessary to point out that more than half of the thirty-nine addresses delivered from the platform were spoken in Yiddish, and that about ninety per cent of the speeches urged the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Revealing too, of the tactics that were employed, is this singular incident which is of special interest to this congregation and community. One of the San Francisco delegates, a past-president of this congregation and a non-Zionist, was unable, at the last moment, to attend the convention and never appeared. He had volunteered his services to the United States Army and had already reported for duty. During the Conference, an innocent comment by another member of the San Francisco delegation developed the astonishing information that Mr. Dinkelspiel was registered as being present, and that his credentials, including his vote, had been turned over to someone, who, to this day, remains anonymous. Yet it is on the basis of such a vote, taken at such a Zionist-planned and Zionist-dominated conference that we, and the entire American public, are asked to believe that "now all American Jews share the ideals and aspirations of the Zionist organization of America."

Such is the position, which I have tried to state in the identical language of its authorized spokesman, of Jewish nationalism. Let us now examine the position of those who dissent from these views.

Their attitude is represented by an organization known as the American Council for Judaism. It was organized a few months ago at the suggestion of about ninety Reform rabbis who, for a long time, had as individuals, rejected the philosophy and opposed the program of Jewish nationalism. In recent weeks, the organization has established headquarters in Philadelphia and announced a National Committee, under the presidency of Mr. Lessing Rosenwald. Despite the terrific abuse and misrepresentation to which it has been subjected (including a ban of excommunication), the American Council for Judaism is growing with astonishing rapidity as American Jews are learning of its existence, and becoming acquainted with its principles.

The central conviction of the American Council is that the basis of unity among Jews is not political nationalism, but religion. The Council contends that Jews should and do consider themselves nationals of those countries in which they live, and those lands their homelands. It sees the Jewish problem, tragic and appalling as it is, in the last analysis a part of the world problem. Eventually it will have to be settled in those countries where Jews reside. The creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, the Council maintains, will not solve the problem of Jews living in other countries. On the contrary, it may well aggravate them. It will not even solve the problems of the Jews in Palestine. Certainly it will not contribute to an amicable or just or democratic settlement of the friction between Arabs and Jews. In this connection the Council calls attention to the fact that the serious restrictions against Jewish immigration into Palestine resulted from a long series of riots, assassinations and bloody clashes between an intensified Jewish nationalism and a defensive Arab nationalism.

What is the attitude of the American Council toward Palestine? This has been so grossly misrepresented that clarification is urgently needed. The American Council supports whole-heartedly the cultural, economic, industrial, agricultural and religious development of the Holy Land. It regards as discriminatory and unfair the British White Paper which proposes to freeze the Jewish population in Palestine at its present level. But it believes that it is not alone unjust, but injurious to the best interests of Jews generally and the best interests of Palestine Jews especially, to demand that regardless of their minority status, they be given control of the country and established as a political Jewish state. It believes that Jews and Arabs working harmoniously

together in Palestine, under a democratic form of government, democratically arrived at, which shall afford equal protection and opportunity to all men regardless of race, nationality or creed, represents an equitable solution of the problem in harmony with the ideals of the Four Freedoms for which we are fighting. The Council maintains that Palestine is *one* of the countries to which Jews ought to be permitted to immigrate if they desire. But at the same time, it calls upon the United Nations to liberalize the opportunities for all persecuted and uprooted peoples of Europe to re-establish themselves in their *former* homes if that is what they want, or to find homes after the war in other lands if they wish to emigrate.

This differs very significantly from the Zionist position. Speaking at the American Jewish Conference in New York, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, one of the most influential Zionist leaders, revealed the official Zionist mind on this question. "Whatever else we demand of the world of tomorrow," he said, "equality of rights, protection of minorities, punishment of criminals—*is not specifically Jewish*. It is the application of the elementary principles of democracy to the Jewish people. There is one *specific* demand we have to make to-day—and this is the demand to end the anomalous position of the Jewish people and to allow us to live as a normal people." Now the American Council is not asking for such exceptional privileges and favors for Jews. It will be content, quite content, if, in Mr. Goldmann's own language, "the elementary principles of democracy" protect the civil, economic, and religious freedoms of all men, Jews as well as non-Jews, in the post-war world.

Moreover, the American Council does not subscribe to the principle, so fundamental in Zionist thinking, of the "homelessness" of the Jewish community. Even if it were true, which it is not, that we all regard ourselves as being in "Galut"—in exile—certainly a Jewish state would not solve the problem. According to the Zionists' own estimates, after the war the probable total Jewish population in the world will be about 14,000,000. Five million of them are in America. Do we consider ourselves homeless? Do we wish to be reconstituted in Palestine as a nation? Another five million are in Russia. Are they homeless? Do they wish to be re-established in Palestine as a separate nation? Do the Jews of Great Britain, Canada, Mexico, Holland, Belgium, France, Turkey, the South American nations, South Africa, consider themselves homeless? Do they want to be re-constituted in Palestine as a nation?

Now it may be that the Zionists are correct in their sweeping assertion that political nationalism represents the goal and ideal of practically all the Jews in the world. It is possible that the American Council for Judaism is deluding itself when it denies that claim, particularly as far as American Jewry is concerned. But in any case, the problem is not as simple as the expertly facile pen of Maurice Samuel slants it in the September *American Mercury*. The article opens with consternation at "the bewildering spectacle of Jews banded together to prevent other Jews from acquiring a national homeland in Palestine." Might one suggest that a little more historical perspective and a little less hysterical invective would bring the really "bewildering spectacle" in this situation into proper focus? For here is an astonishing paradox with no parallel in history—ninety-six per cent of a people who are all nationals of other countries demanding a separate state for themselves, *when practically none of the ninety-six per cent remotely intends or desires to live in it!*

One might think that the Zionist claims of homelessness would surely apply, of all people, to the persecuted and tortured Jews of Poland. The savagery and brutality of the Nazi slaughter of Polish Jewry, where probably more than one million people were exterminated, is of all the black pages in the record of this war, the foulest. By the same token, when the history of this struggle is written, one of its noblest paragraphs will be devoted to the gallant resistance of the Warsaw Jewish ghetto against the German troops. William Zuckerman, who for twenty years was the Chief European Correspondent of the New York Jewish *Morning Journal*, tells that story in the September issue of *Harper's Magazine*. By April 19th of this year, the more than six hundred thousand Jews crowded into the unspeakably vile ghetto of Warsaw, had been reduced by famine, epidemics and mass murder, to thirty-five thousand. Those remaining Jews obtained arms secretly through underground channels. At a prearranged signal they offered open resistance to the Nazis. For one long month the struggle raged until nearly every house in the district had been razed to rubble, and from twenty to twenty-five thousand Jews had been slain. Now, surely one might think that if there were Jews anywhere in the world who considered themselves homeless, and passionately desired a Jewish state of their own, they could be found among this heroic remnant. Listen to William Zuckerman on this point: "The heroic men and women who died on the barricades of Warsaw belonged to a section of Jews who held that their

home was in the countries where they had been born, had worked, and had contributed to wealth and culture. They passionately resented the claim of Hitler and other anti-Semites that the Jews were aliens everywhere and that the solution of the Jewish problem lay in the removal of the Jews from their present homes to a national home or state of their own. To them the future of the European Jews, after the war, lay in Europe, in the homes which they had loved and fought for. They always opposed the various plans made by their charitable brothers overseas for their evacuation after the war.” There you have it. Nothing could be more completely devastating to the Zionist contention of Jewish homelessness.

I said at the outset of my address that this holy day charges us with the obligation to assume personal responsibility for our conduct and decisions. The post-war status of the Jews is a concern that affects deeply and intimately and permanently the lives of everyone of you here tonight, and of your children and children’s children. You cannot be silent and indifferent on this issue!

I do not plead with you tonight on behalf of either of these two important movements by which American Jews are identifying their loyalties. Let me confine my appeal to the moral obligation that rests upon everyone of you to make a decision in this matter and to take your place on one side or the other. If you believe in the homelessness of the Jewish people, that nationality and race are the determining and unique features of Judaism, that the Jews ought to have their own state and army, and that such a political arrangement will solve the Jewish problem, then I urge you by all means to register your convictions where they will be effective, and join the Zionist Organization of America, and the Hadassah. But if, on the other hand, you believe that the Jews ought to be and are nationals of those countries in which they dwell, that we are essentially and uniquely united by a common historic faith and a deathless allegiance to religious values, that the Jewish problem is part of the world problem and can only be solved by the just application of democratic principles which shall give to all men civic and religious freedom, regardless of race or creed, and that the Jewish community in Palestine ought to be encouraged and aided to work out its relationship to the Arab and Christian Palestinians on the basis of these democratic principles, then you should join the American Council for Judaism and make your opinion effective through that organization.

I do not believe that the sixty-seven thousand members of the Zionist organization are qualified to declare that they represent the settled and responsible convictions of the five million Jews of America. I challenge the claim that the American Jewish Conference, which displayed the Zionist flag at equal size and prominence as the American flag, which conducted much of its proceedings in Yiddish, with hardly a word of prayer or a religious reference, and very little concern for any problems besetting world Jewry other than a Jewish political state in Palestine, mirrored the true sentiments of the five million Jews of America. I protest as a misleading and dangerous distortion of truth, the implication that American Jews are fighting and dying, not so much to secure a just and lasting peace under the Four Freedoms for all men everywhere, not so much for love of America and devotion to it as their homeland, as for special rights and favors and privileges for Jews that go beyond "the elementary principles of democracy."

It is for you, on this solemn night when our actions are judged by God, to search your own hearts and souls on this crucial matter; to consider well your decision, in the light of your highest loyalties and the welfare of your children and our beloved country; and then to register those convictions for all the world to see and hear.

THE JEWS AND THE WORLD TODAY¹

THE privilege of addressing the Commonwealth Club is one which I highly esteem. Nearly thirteen years have passed since I spoke to you on a subject quite similar to our theme today; and in the intervening time the face of the entire planet has been changed. A new era has made its appearance and the pattern of human destiny has been profoundly altered. Thirteen years ago I had just returned from a visit to Hitler's Germany and a number of contiguous countries which he was subsequently to overrun and dominate. In my report to you on that occasion, I pointed out that his assault upon the Jews, while fraught with tragedy and disaster for my co-religionists, carried ominous implications for all of Western civilization. I reminded you of the classic axiom that the status of the Jew in any society constituted a reliable barometer, indicating the degree of enlightenment, humanity and culture which prevailed, and that if the history of human affairs during the last two thousand five hundred years contained any lesson or warning for our day, then what was happening to the Jews in Germany was much more than a cloud the size of a man's hand, pre-saging the danger that threatened the world.

It is a melancholy truism that hindsight is clearer than foresight. Standing today on the summit of the vast and gruesome human wreckage and social débris of a war-exhausted civilization, and looking back over the crimson path we have traveled, it is perfectly obvious now that the Nazi assault upon the Jews was, as indeed we were then told, a lateral attack upon the whole system of democratic ideals and values. It was both a technique and a testing ground deliberately employed with shrewd calculation to ascertain the sensitivity of the conscience of mankind. The rest is history. Had the moral conscience of the civilized world refused then to countenance the deliberate and systematic degradation and liquidation of an innocent community, based upon no more substantial grounds than racial and religious bigotry, the Nazi evil would have been crushed in its incipient stages, mankind would have been spared the agony of the most devastating war in history, and millions of human beings, as well as untold material resources would have been saved from destruction.

In a world such as ours today, in which the cup of human sorrow in so many lands is filled to overflowing, one hesitates to focus attention upon only one

¹ An address delivered to the Commonwealth Club of California, at the Palace Hotel, San Francisco, April 5, 1946.

segment of this planetary calamity. If I appear to do so today, I submit that it is only in deference to your invitation and request, a request prompted, I believe, by the realization that the Jews were not only the first, but the chief victims of the Hitler madness. Fully one-third of the Jewish community that existed in the world before the war has been destroyed. No other people or racial group or religious community has suffered anything like a comparable extermination. If there are, as Dante in his "Divine Comedy" suggests, degrees of persecution and torture, the Jews of Europe have surely experienced the lowest depths. Nothing in our millennial history, replete as it is with sorrow and persecution and exile and suffering, can begin to parallel the harrowing events of the last decade. Always in periods of world crisis and widespread social dislocation, when man's rational faculties seemed powerless to deal intelligently with complex economic and social problems, the Jew has been a convenient scapegoat and handy whipping-boy. This was true during the period of the Crusades; it was true during the ravages of the Black Death over Europe. It was repeated during the Thirty Years War and the Napoleonic Wars and after the First World War; and in our day the demonstration reached proportions of unparalleled intensity and magnitude.

It would be tempting, did time permit and were I possessed of sufficient competence, to analyze the reasons for this curious phenomenon. Anti-Semitism is a disease. It appears to be as widespread as cancer, and as little understood. As a matter of fact, our total knowledge of human nature, of the mysterious forces and impulses and drives which govern human beings, is fragmentary, inadequate, contradictory and frequently erroneous. If we knew as much about what makes people tick as we do about what makes a machine go, in all probability we would long since have had a world organized for peace and a society from which every predatory motive had been eliminated. Some day perhaps psychology and the other social sciences will be developed to a point where the mysterious forces of human behavior and personality will be as amenable to intelligent analysis and control as the physical forces of nature. But until that happens, the aberrations of human behavior will continue to baffle and bedevil us. This much we already know: that bigotry, prejudice, unreasoning and blind hatred are the indispensable ingredients of anti-Semitism. Moreover, there is not a society on earth in which the Jew does not constitute a minority. Any minority group anywhere is an easy tar-

get for discrimination. Nor is this purely a contemporary phenomenon. Since time immemorial, minority groups have been the victims of reactionary political and economic opportunists, who sought to entrench themselves behind or climb to power over their prostrate bodies. In "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh," Franz Werfel describes the martyrdom of the little Armenian group, a small Christian island in a Mohammedan sea, oppressed and tortured when the lean years brought general distress. At the beginning of the common era, a similar fate befell the early loyal Christians in a preponderantly pagan world. Tertullian, one of the church fathers, described it thus: "If the Tiber rose to the walls of the city, if the inundation of the Nile failed to give the fields enough water, if the heavens did not send rain, if an earthquake occurred, if famine threatened, if pestilence raged, the cry resounded: 'Throw the Christians to the lions!'" How strikingly this classic formula was invoked against the Jews in modern Germany.

Nor was the poison of anti-Semitic propaganda which bore the label "Made in Germany" confined to that land or the territories which subsequently came under Axis domination. The objective of the Nazis, unequivocally announced in "Mein Kampf" and reiterated again and again with hysterical frequency was the complete annihilation of world Jewry. That propaganda, systematically and painstakingly disseminated with teutonic thoroughness on a world-wide scale, still hangs like a heavy cloud over every land today. It is responsible not only for the vast and continuing tragedy of Jews in many lands, but has created confusion in the minds of many sincere and honest persons regarding the true nature and status of the Jew.

The persistence with which these artfully fabricated myths continue is both appalling and discouraging. I claim no competence whatever to discuss many of the economic, technological, industrial or political problems which agitate modern society today. But I do claim, as a rabbi and teacher in Israel, some competence to talk intelligently about the Jews. They differ among themselves as widely as do Catholics and Protestants and members of any other religious communion. To speak of Jewish solidarity and Jewish unity is fantastic. It is an old, but constantly proved witticism in Jewish circles that the only thing about which two Jews will agree is the amount that the third Jew, who has just left the room, should give to charity. They never act as a unit. They are divided along numerous economic, social, political, religious and

cultural grounds. Anyone who pretends to speak for all Jews, or any considerable portion of them, not only in matters temporal but even in matters ecclesiastical, is guilty of presumption. Any politician or rabbi who claims the ability to deliver the so-called Jewish vote is a charlatan. The Jewish vote is as great a myth as "The Elders of Zion." The Jewish people have no central organization or authority. Although there is a general acceptance among Jews of the fundamental principles and theological tenets of Judaism, the Jews are divided religiously, not quite as hopelessly or prolifically as the Protestants, but divided none the less. There are Orthodox and Conservative and Reform Jews, there are non-religious and agnostic and atheistic Jews. The much-talked-about typical Jew is a phantom. It is my business to deal with Jews and I have never, in all my experience, met a typical Jew. There is no such thing as a Jewish type. Jews are blond and dark; they are tall and short; they are fat and lean. They are artisans and business men; they are professionals and intellectuals; they are prominent and they are inconspicuous; they are articulate and they are quiet. They are rascals and they are saints. They are geniuses and they are morons. It is high time to launch a vigorous counter-offensive upon the intellectual rubbish that forms the anti-Semite's stock-in-trade by clearing away these silly and irrational misconceptions.

One of the most deep-seated errors current about the Jews is that they constitute a race. It is amazing to find how prevalent this notion is even in intellectual and academic circles where such scientific illiteracy might be least expected. The term "race" except where it is used metaphorically or poetically or colloquially, has very definite scientific credentials. Anthropologists define a race as a group of people or a community exhibiting a continuity of distinctive physical characteristics transmitted by heredity. On the basis of these factors the human family is divided, broadly speaking, into three great races: the White, the Black and the Yellow, to which occasionally a fourth, the Brown race, is added. You will find Jews represented in every one of these races of mankind. There are thousands of Negro Jews in Abyssinia whose physical characteristics are indistinguishable from those of their non-Jewish Negro neighbors. There are Jews in China whose features are authentically Chinese; and in Western lands, depending upon the environmental circumstances and the factors of climate, nutrition, occupation and heredity, the Jews exhibit all the characteristics of the Caucasian group of which they are an integral part.

It is obvious, therefore, that anyone who uses the term "race" to describe the Jews is employing an arbitrary classification that is completely unsupported by fact.

Another common misconception about the Jews is that they are a nation. This description is equally unsound and unsupportable. It is obvious that the English, the French, the Danes, the Irish, are nations. They have a common language, history, land and government to which they all give allegiance. Two thousand five hundred years ago the Jews were a nation. They had their own land and government in Palestine. They spoke a common language and shared a common national experience. Today there is a very powerful and highly organized effort being made to reconstitute the Jews again as a nation in Palestine. Should it prove successful, *those Jews who go there may create for themselves* a nation, but unless and until that occurs, Jews are nowhere a nation. They are unequivocally loyal nationals of the countries of which they are citizens.

Nor is it possible, without a complete disregard for semantics (which deals with the meaning of words) to classify the Jews as a nationality. Frequently an analogy is drawn on the one hand between the status of the Jews today and on the other, the status of the Poles under the Czar, and the Czechs under Austria before the Treaty of Versailles. It is argued that despite their inclusion in the Russian empire, the Poles retained their Polish nationality and the Czechs, regardless of their subject state in Austria, were still of Czech nationality. Following that line of analogical reasoning, it is argued that the Jews today constitute a nationality. What this line of reasoning fails to take into account is that the Poles and the Czechs all wanted their own land and government for themselves. They were practically unanimously committed to a national hope of being restored to their former country and government. That is emphatically not the case among the Jews. The five million Jews in America do not consider themselves homeless. They are as intensely and patriotically devoted to this land as are any of its most loyal citizens. Even in the event that a Jewish state were established in Palestine, it is doubtful whether more than a mere handful of American Jews would emigrate there. The five million Jews in Russia are likewise loyal nationals of their country. The same can be said of the Jews of Great Britain, and France, and the Scandinavian countries, and practically every land from which the Jews have not

been brutally expatriated and displaced. To call a people nationals of a non-existent state, in which, even if it were ultimately established, less than six or seven per cent of them ever expect to live, is to torture language and empty words of their meaning.

If we are not a race or a nation or a nationality, the obvious question arises, what are we? In some respects, it is difficult to apply to the Jewish people the conventional designations. This much, however, is indisputably true; that the strongest bond of union among Jews throughout the world is the religious tie. *We are members or descendants of a religious community.* The only allegiance we share in common on any important international scale is our loyalty to a body of religious truths and to a common religious tradition. It is significant that when the Jew abandons his faith, he disappears as a Jew in two or three generations. Some of the most prominent members of the San Francisco Christian community are the descendants of Jewish pioneers who helped to organize my own congregation. Jewish culture is thoroughly religious. Our most memorable and audacious contributions to civilization were made in the field of religion, and if we have survived the disappearance of kingdoms and empires, it was only because of our religious steadfastness which gave us the strength and the will to endure.

The overwhelming tragedy that has overtaken our fellow-Jews in Europe has not only given a new direction and impetus to organized Jewish life today, but has brought the so-called Jewish problem once more prominently to the foreground of public attention. Before the outbreak of the recent war there were about sixteen million Jews in the world. Of these, 6,500,000, exclusive of the Jewish population of Soviet Russia, inhabited continental Europe. When the war ended, these 6,500,000 had been reduced to not more than 1,400,000. Official German documents used at the Nuremburg trials of the Nazi war criminals, show that about 6,000,000 European Jews were murdered. This figure includes one and a half million who died on the soil of Soviet Russia during the Nazi occupation. The mind staggers at the astronomical proportions of this mass murder, unprecedented for barbarity and ferocity in human annals. Before the war, Poland had a Jewish population of 3,500,000. Today, less than 80,000 survive, including 10,000 who have fled to the American zone of occupation in Germany. The pre-war Jewish population of Hungary numbered 800,000. Of these, less than 180,000 are alive today. The Jewish popu-

lation of Belgium was reduced from 83,000 to 15,000. In Greece, where 65,000 Jews formerly lived, less than two thousand are left. The statistics for other countries which fell into the clutches of the Nazis all follow the same ghastly pattern. Before the war there were 1,300,000 Jewish children up to fourteen years of age in Europe. Of these, less than 150,000 survive. Most of them are fully or half-orphaned. In all of Poland less than five thousand Jewish children are alive. A painstaking and carefully conducted investigation by responsible inter-governmental and Jewish agencies reveals the shocking fact that out of a pre-war population in Poland of 3,500,000, no more than one hundred Jewish families are intact today. I shall not challenge your credulity any further by dwelling upon this gruesome balance-sheet. The fearful casualties of the war have inevitably, however lamentably, blunted our ability to comprehend the significance of these staggering figures. Perhaps three things should be said in connection with these statistics. First, that they are indisputably accurate and have been verified by competent authorities; second, that they do not include the casualty lists of Jews who served in the armed forces of the United Nations; and third, that these six million human beings must be placed in a category completely apart from the conventional lists of military and civilian war casualties. These people were deliberately machine-gunned, asphyxiated, jammed in freight cars exuding poison gases; they were slowly starved and systematically exterminated. Their veins were drained of blood for plasma and then filled with air bubbles, that they might die in torment. They dropped dead in exhaustion from forced labor or perished in futile resistance as did the heroic defenders of the Warsaw ghetto against overwhelming and impossible odds. And now their shattered remnants, save in those liberal lands in which democracy and decency are being restored, are compelled not only to face the common hardships of the general population, but are exposed to the backwash of a persistent and malevolent anti-Semitism which curses the ground and poisons the very atmosphere in which they live. Only 165,000 of the 765,000 Jews who survive in Eastern Europe reside in countries where UNRRA may operate. 600,000 are presently in ex-enemy countries and consequently ineligible for inter-governmental assistance.

This frightful catastrophe is much more than the concern of Jews. It imposes a heavy obligation upon the collective conscience of the world. Speaking in New Haven a few weeks ago, Senator Alben Barkley declared: "The

hunger, homelessness and destitution of Europe's 1,400,000 Jewish survivors is a major issue which the governments of the world must recognize as a primary factor in the foundation of a permanent peace." On the same day, in a public address at Patterson, New Jersey, Senator Harley Kilgore of West Virginia, said: "Restoration to a life of security and dignity for Europe's homeless and destitute Jewish survivors must be the world's first step toward just compensation for the agonies suffered by the first victims of naziism." And John D. Rockefeller, in a statement accompanying his gift of \$100,000 to the \$100,000,000 campaign of the United Jewish Appeal, wrote as follows: "The plight of the Jewish survivors abroad makes an appeal that needs no argument or reinforcement." Certain it is that no permanent stability is possible for any people or nation in Europe unless a just and humane solution is found for the broken and dispossessed remnants of Israel.

The greatest and most immediate need is obviously relief and rehabilitation. The ravages of war and concentration camps and the continuing scarcity of food, clothing, shelter and medical supplies have created a problem of the first magnitude. A vast program of philanthropic assistance to supplement the inadequate aid from other sources has been undertaken by the Jewish communities in lands of freedom. First and foremost there is the necessity of keeping these people alive; of preventing famine, exposure and disease from making still greater inroads on their shrunken numbers. The Jews of America have set themselves the herculean task of raising \$100,000,000 to further this program. In many cities the campaigns are already under way, and there is every indication that the quotas will be met. Never has American Jewry been more united in its unstinted support of a project than it is today on behalf of its suffering co-religionists in all the countries of their tragedy.

A second point upon which there is no disagreement either among Jews or non-Jews is that those survivors of the Hitler fury who have been uprooted from their former homes and wish to return, ought to be encouraged and assisted to do so. The peace treaties have not yet been written. If the victory of the United Nations is not to be stripped of all ethical and moral significance, if the Four Freedoms for which we fought are to be part of the post-war world we want to live in, then it is imperative that the citizens of every state, regardless of race or religion, be fully protected by a constitution and a bill of rights guaranteeing the political, economic and social equality of every man,

woman and child. You cannot have a first-class world and countenance second- and third-class citizens. Moreover, no Jew should be compelled against his will to return to a land in which he was despoiled, degraded, stripped of citizenship and reduced to a pariah.

This means that opportunities for emigration to other countries must be afforded to displaced and stateless persons of all faiths, who recoil with horror from returning to lands which have become graveyards for them, for their families and their hopes. There are many sparsely settled countries and territories in the world that are able to provide homes for these victims of brutality. It is incumbent upon the free peoples of the world, not only for reasons of humanity but for political considerations as well, to cooperate in finding a solution for this problem, which goes far beyond the scope of philanthropy and relief.

As far as the stateless Jews in Europe are concerned, Palestine unquestionably offers the most promising solution. There are approximately 100,000 Jews in the displaced persons camps in the American and British occupied zones in Germany and Austria. Of these, it is reported that the overwhelming majority, probably more than ninety per cent, are desperately eager to emigrate to Palestine. Bartley Crum, our fellow San Franciscan, who is a member of the Anglo-American Committee on Inquiry that has recently completed an exhaustive survey of the Jewish problem in Europe and Palestine, after touring the American zone in Germany, said: "If we don't clear out the displaced persons camps in the United States zone in Germany, we will have mass suicides of Jews, or they will try to fight their way into Palestine." Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt, in an address at Temple Emanu-El last week, presented a graphic description of the pitiful scenes she observed at first-hand during her recent visit to Germany. As an illustration of the passionate desire of these unfortunates to begin their lives anew in an atmosphere of freedom and decency, she recounted the incident of an old woman who knelt at her feet in the mud, clasped her arms around Mrs. Roosevelt's knees, and looking beseechingly into her face, whispered the one word, "Palestine." President Truman, aware of this widespread sentiment among the stateless Jewish refugees overseas, addressed a letter last August 21 to the Prime Minister of England requesting the admission of 100,000 Jews into Palestine. It is understandable that this yearning for an open door to opportunity and freedom and the re-

covery of human dignity should be so passionate in the hearts of these people. Millions of Jews in America reject the political philosophy of Zionism, but I have yet to meet a Jew who does not heartily support and encourage to the fullest the greatest possible immigration of Jewish refugees into Palestine. Moreover, it cannot be denied that the Jewish people have a special claim upon that land. I do not refer to any title that goes back to biblical times. The statute of limitations has expired on that. The claim of an open door to Palestine for the Jews inheres in the Balfour Declaration issued by Great Britain during the First World War on November 2, 1917, and which reads as follows: "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other countries."

Under the terms by which Great Britain was entrusted with the mandate for Palestine by the League of Nations, it was expected that this commitment would be scrupulously and honorably fulfilled. It has not been. On the contrary, serious obstacles have been placed in the way of Jews fleeing from persecution who wish to find asylum in Palestine. The British White Paper issued in 1939 restricting Jewish immigration to 75,000 for a period of five years, and prohibiting the further acquisition of land by Jews, was outrageously discriminatory. One does not have to be a Zionist or favor the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine to recognize and protest these injustices.

The American Jewish community today presents a paradox as far as Palestine is concerned. We are hopelessly divided in our views regarding the political future of Palestine. Many of us are unalterably opposed for reasons of deep conviction, to the establishment of a Jewish state. We are, however, completely united in our conviction that as a democratic commonwealth Palestine can and should provide a home for our disinherited and downtrodden fellow Jews who seek its shelter.

Much of the disagreement and fierce contention in both Jewish and political circles today concerning the future of Palestine is academic. Most of the Zionists are really concerned with the rescue, relief and rehabilitation of Jews and not with the politics of Palestine. Most of the anti-Zionists are equally

concerned with rescue, relief and rehabilitation and are as vigorously pro-Palestine as they are anti-Jewish nationalist. At present the population of Palestine is approximately 600,000 Jews as against 1,200,000 Arabs. The admittance of 100,000 Jews will not materially alter this equilibrium. The land is ready and able to receive and sustain them. Competent and impartial authorities support this conclusion. The latest survey of the country's absorptive capacity was recently concluded by the American Council on Public Affairs. It was made by a group of economists headed by Robert R. Nathan, former deputy director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. "From an economic point of view," the report says, "there can be no question that the Jews have been a great progressive force in Palestine. It is estimated that between 615,000 and 1,125,000 Jewish immigrants could be absorbed during the next decade."

Unfortunately, the Zionist insistence that Palestine be made a Jewish state has created enormous difficulties. It has aroused the Arabs to a fever pitch of counter-nationalism, and kept the country in a state of turmoil. The policy of the Mandatory Power has been vacillating, inconsistent and unpredictable. At the present time the Anglo-American Committee on Inquiry has concluded its exhaustive investigations and is preparing its report and recommendations. One may confidently predict that the solution they will propose will be less than the Zionists demand and more than the Arabs are ready to yield. There appears to be no good reason why the country, for the present and immediate future, cannot resolve its difficulties under a democratic form of government under the trusteeship of the United Nations in which there shall be equality of rights and obligations for all citizens regardless of whether they be Moslem or Jew or Christian or unbeliever. One consideration alone is of paramount importance: the great need of the homeless. Human lives must take precedence over the politics of Palestine.

We Jews are an old people. We are a religious people—the people of the Book. Again and again has our metal been tested in the fires of man's fierce inhumanity and our resistance forged on the anvil of world crisis. We know that the ultimate solution of our destiny is in the hands of God. We know that the world needs us most when it hates us most; that our problem is part of the world's problem; that our day of healing will dawn only when the ills that afflict the soul of humanity are cured. To hasten that day is our prayer, our hope and our task.

JUDAISM IN ECLIPSE—THE DECLINE OF AN HISTORIC MISSION¹

WHEN the organization under whose auspices we meet tonight was established in 1943, one of the important decisions which it confronted was the formulation of a name which would clearly reveal its character, its purpose, its philosophy and its program. The selection of the title, American Council for Judaism, was not a hasty or careless choice. Every word it contains goes to the heart of what we are seeking to strengthen and promote. By "American" we mean the character of our constituency and national loyalty. "Council" means assembly, and describes the democratic nature of our organization. Judaism denotes our religion. Together these three key words represent values which we treasure and revere: our national status, the democratic process, and our religious identification.

Now, we of the American Council for Judaism do not maintain that of all Jewish organizations in the United States we alone are concerned with the preservation and defense of these transcendent values. We are confident that they are equally precious to the overwhelming majority of our fellow-Jews in America. In our country, Zionists do not have less of American freedom than anti-Zionists; shekel-payers do not have fewer open doors to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness than members of the American Council for Judaism. All American Jewish parents want for their children in the United States the same opportunity, security and dignity that all American parents want for their children, regardless of race, religion, or national origin. American Jews are not planning a mass exodus to Israel. And since this is so, it is deplorable that a contrary impression is being stamped out on the anvil of American public opinion by the hammer of Jewish political nationalism. The vast resources of the greatest, wealthiest, most skillfully organized and astutely directed propaganda machine in the millennial history of the Jews, are committed to the incredible enterprise of changing the status of American Jewry from a religious community to a political nationality, and the character of Judaism from a universal religion to a tribal cult. I know of no period in Jewish history where the words of Holy Writ were more applicable or needed: "It is time to work for the Lord, they disregard Thy law."

In this gathering it is unnecessary for me to compile an anthology of cita-

¹ Delivered April 13, 1951, at the Seventh Annual Conference of the American Council for Judaism, Chicago, Illinois.

tions to establish the charge that the status of Judaism and the Jew in America is in process of serious alteration. Other speakers at this convention have adequately performed that service. Moreover, our organization from time to time has published the testimony of Zionist leaders on this subject. The forthcoming pamphlet, *Blueprint No. 2*, abounds with corroborating statements culled from the utterances of Zionist leaders in the top echelons of nationalist strategy. And let it be emphasized that these do not distort the context of the addresses or the literature from which they were taken. For the unbiased and informed mind, therefore, there cannot possibly be any doubt regarding the real aims of the Zionist movement. Curiously enough, however, the rank and file Zionist in America, the average individual who is enrolled in the movement, shows little if any awareness that he is being taken for a ride. He knows he is on a bandwagon, but he has been so thoroughly anaesthetized with the opiates of Zionist propaganda that he is in total ignorance of where he is headed. He recalls that he got aboard on a highway marked "Rescue, Relief and Rehabilitation," but he failed to notice that after he paid his fare, the driver detoured to a road marked "Jewish Political Nationalism." One of the primary tasks of the American Council for Judaism is to warn him, as well as his traveling companions and hitch-hikers, that they had better transfer to a more dependable vehicle. The car they are riding is an obsolete model of Eastern European manufacture. Its sparkplugs are tricky, its gas is synthetic, its springs were crystallized in old-world ghettos, and its tires were inflated with foreign hot air that evaporates on American highways.

It is not inappropriate to inquire how the Jew in America ever managed to be maneuvered into such a fantastic situation. The explanation does credit to the Jewish soul. It is a tribute to the spontaneous and overwhelming generosity of our response to human suffering. Adolph Hitler did more for Jewish nationalism than Theodor Herzl and all the Zionists who ever blew the trumpets of retreat from Western emancipation. The State of Israel is Adolph Hitler's immortality.

Our ancient rabbis said that when Ahasuerus placed the ring of regency on Haman's finger, he did more to preserve Judaism than all the prophets, teachers and sages. That observation, sadly enough, can hardly be applied to the impact of Hitler upon our religious faith. The State of Israel stands, but the status of Judaism declines. The historic mission of Judaism to pro-

claim the unity of God is being whittled down to proclaim the unity of Jews with the State of Israel. No sect or party in Judaism has escaped this deterioration. Let us examine the evidences of this pathetic retrogression.

A logical place for our inquiry to start is with an understanding of what Judaism is, what constitutes its essence and individuality. In his scholarly and definitive work on Jewish theology, Kaufmann Kohler defines Judaism in this manner: "Judaism is nothing less than a message concerning the ONE AND HOLY GOD AND ONE UNDIVIDED HUMANITY with a world-uniting messianic goal, a message entrusted by divine revelation to the Jewish people." In the same work the great theologian amplifies this description: "The central idea of Judaism and its life purpose is the doctrine of the ONE ONLY AND HOLY GOD, Whose kingdom of truth, justice and peace is to be universally established at the end of time. This is the main teaching of Scriptures, and the hope voiced in the liturgy; while Israel's mission to defend, to unfold and to propagate this truth is a corollary of the doctrine itself and cannot be separated from it."¹

The brevity of these formulations is exceeded only by their accuracy and time-tested comprehensiveness. They derive directly from the Bible, the Talmud and our classical religious literature. They stress the fundamental doctrines of God as the Father of all mankind, the inter-relatedness of all human beings, the vision of a Golden Age as an attainable ideal, and the priestly character of both the Jewish community and Israel's mission.

These are exalted universal concepts. They represent the essence of Judaism, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform. Lest there be any confusion or adroit manipulation of these values to accommodate contrary principles, Kohler clearly states that "Judaism . . . does not denote the Jewish nationality, with its political and cultural achievements and aspirations, as those who have lost faith in the religious mission of Israel would have it."

It is as though this doughty "Battler for the Lord" were paraphrasing the words of Isaiah: "I am the Lord, that is My name, and My glory I will not give to another." God is central in Judaism, nothing else—no state, no government, no army, no flag, no tribal nationalism, no philanthropy. The religious community called Israel (and it was a calculated stroke of political cleverness

¹ Kaufmann Kohler, *Jewish Theology*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1918, p. 8.

for the new nation to have appropriated this classic religious designation) was fanatically dogmatic on one thing only, namely, monotheism. No Jew ever burned on the pyre or went into exile proclaiming the unity of the Jewish nation. What has "Sh'ma Yisroel"¹ to do with doctrinaire blood-land-culture concepts? Even so prejudiced a partisan as Joseph Heller in his official volume "The Zionist Idea" is constrained to write: "Only in the sphere of religion have the Jews preserved a specific spiritual tradition of their own; and this tradition seems to be the only bond of union between all the heterogeneous parts of world Jewry today."² It was this religious faith, and nothing else, that gave dignity and meaning to exile, persecution, and sorrow. Therefore, Kaufmann Kohler could properly declare that "the place of the Jew is not among the League of Nations but among the League of Religions."

This conception of Judaism as a universal faith and of Israel as a priest-people dominated Judaism and the Jew throughout history. Since biblical times we were "a Kingdom of Priests and a holy people" whose God-appointed task it was to be "His witness and His messenger to the peoples of the earth."

From the seventh pre-Christian century when Judaism emerged from narrow tribalism, and under the revolutionary influence of our great prophets interpreted the destiny of the Jew in values whose moral insights, ethical disciplines and universal ideals have never been eclipsed, we have always considered ourselves a religious community dedicated to a religious purpose. Nor was this service, as well as the privileges and obligations it entailed, considered the exclusive prerogative of individuals born in the household of Israel. Ruth, a Moabite, is welcomed cordially when she declares, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God." Isaiah expresses in words of enduring beauty the relationship between God and the Jewish community: "But thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen; seed of Abraham, my friend."

This mystical intimacy has practical implications. "I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness," for the purpose of making thee "a covenant of peoples, a light to the nations, to bring forth the right."

¹ Hear O Israel (the Lord our God, the Lord is one). This is the central doctrine of Judaism.

² Joseph Heller, *The Zionist Idea* (Special ed. for the Zionist Organization of America. New York: Schocken Books, 1949), p. 26.

And again he says, "Ye are my witnesses — to open the blind eyes, to bring forth the prisoners out of the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

No mere lip service will suffice here. Israel's selection imposes obligations. Alas, few Jews and even fewer Christians have understood the meaning of Israel's selection in terms of service. More frequently it has been interpreted in terms of special privilege. Scripture is very clear on this point: "Ye only have I known among all the peoples of the earth, saith the Lord, therefore will I visit your iniquities upon you."

Precisely because the Jewish community, as the revealer of God's moral law, stands in such close relationship to Him, He will be more exacting and critical of their behavior.

Let it not, however, be assumed that there is anything exclusive or tribal in this relationship. Amos dispels all doubt on this point: "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto Me, O children of Israel?" And then he goes on to point out that God indeed redeemed Israel from Egyptian slavery, but He also redeemed the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir.

It would be merely piling Ossa on Pelium to cite more biblical and talmudic passages in this connection. Enough has been said to establish the thesis that Judaism is a faith of comprehensive universalism, whose followers were dedicated to a religious conception of their destiny. Our faith was not dependent on land, government, language or blood. When destruction overtook the Hebrew commonwealth and its inhabitants were driven into exile, it was religious loyalty and nothing else that preserved Judaism and the Jew. Believing firmly in the moral government of the universe under a God Who, in the words of Isaiah, is the Creator of both good and evil, Judaism could but regard the exile as a manifestation of the hand of God in history. "In every place where My Name is mentioned, there I will come to thee and bless thee—" that was the answer to the despairing fringe in Babylon who Ezekiel tells us, cried "Our hope is lost, we are utterly cut off."

The rabbis in the Midrash, commenting on the text of Hosea, "And I will sow her unto Me in the earth," observed that just as a farmer scatters seed in order to produce an abundant harvest, so God has scattered Israel abroad, that we might win the world to the recognition of His unity and His moral law.

Now it is no refutation of these fundamental postulates of Judaism to ac-

knowledge that after the dispersion the hope persisted for a return to Palestine. It was a natural sentiment. It would be strange indeed if a people, forcibly torn from its native soil, did not yearningly look backward to its former home and pray to be restored to its lost patrimony. During the centuries these natural sentiments were intensified by bitter persecution in practically every land where Jews lived. Our Zionist friends never cease to belabor the fact, which no one denies, that in the liturgy of the synagogue there were constant prayers for a return to Palestine; that the hope of redemption was faithfully nourished in a thousand ways by our pious forebears. What they conveniently fail to mention, however, is first, that the liturgy contains a great many obsolete notions, literary survivals of worlds that passed; such as, for example, the belief in the resurrection of the body. No intelligent Jew believes that today. And there are similar antiquated ideas which persist, although no one takes them seriously. More to the point, however, is the indisputable fact that this yearning for a return to the ancestral soil was motivated by and saturated with theological and religious principles. It was built upon a messianic hope which involved three cardinal features: first, a personal messiah, who would be a descendent of the House of David; second, the re-institution of the system of sacrifices which ceased when the Temple was destroyed; and third, the reconstitution of the Aaronic priesthood and its theocratic hierarchy. The old prayer book makes this quite obvious: "May it be Thy will O Lord, that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our days . . . and then we will serve Thee with awe, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years."

Nor is the nature of the service referred to left in doubt: "Restore the service to the oracle of Thy House; receive in love and favor both the fire offerings of Israel and their prayer."

The old liturgy repeats these sentiments again and again with ecstatic and redundant fervor. They still continue today as an integral part of Orthodox Jewish worship. If there is a single Jew alive who takes these supplications seriously, I have never met him. What the old synagogue always did take seriously, however, was the messianic emphasis on redemption. From the Talmud through Gabirol, Maimonides, Menasseh Ben-Israel and Jehuda Ha-Levi to Achad Ha'Am, the aspiration for the ingathering of the exiles was not a political, but a religious and theological concept. "And it shall come to pass at the end of days that . . . many nations shall go and say, 'Come ye, and let

us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and we will walk in His paths;’ for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

It was the word of the Lord that was to go forth from Jerusalem, not the word of an Israeli politician telling American Jews: “Israel’s flag is our flag, and it is often necessary to suffer for a flag.”

“Zion shall be redeemed with justice,” so ran the prophecy. Not with acts of terrorism, lynchings, assassinations, and blowing up the steamship *Patria* with its helpless refugees from the Hitler terror. Not with a half-million homeless Arab refugees, and martial law for the oppressed remnant. “Until now,” wrote a Yiddish-American journalist on his return from Israel, taking his courage in both hands, “until now only Gentile majorities have had the privilege of sinning against the minority peoples in their midst; now, however, the Jewish people, too, have acquired that privilege.”

Enough has been said to indicate the character of Judaism and the Jewish community as defined by the mature thought of our prophets, rabbis, sages and teachers. Even so militant a Zionist as Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver has underscored the truism that the Jew survived in the Diaspora because he centered his life in his religion: in the congregation, the school and the synagogue. A Christian scholar, Carleton Hays, comes to the same conclusion. “Historically,” wrote Carleton Hays in his “Essays on Nationalism,” “both in ancient times and throughout the Middle Ages, and even into modern times, the Jews have not been so much a nationality infused with nationalism, as adherents to a religion.”

As recently as 1936, a Zionist president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis whose scholarship had remained unadulterated by his Zionist proclivities, was in all candor compelled to state that “Judaism makes the kingship of God central to all its thought and practice.” If he was right then, how can it be right now to make the nationhood of Israel the central theme of Jewish life and practice? Informed Christian scholars are appalled by the mass desertion from historic Jewish principles that is currently taking place. Listen to Emery Reeves on this subject:

“The Jews have forgotten the fundamental teachings of their religion: universalism. They seem no longer to remember that the One Almighty God chose them to spread the doctrine of the Oneness of the Supreme Law-Giver

among the peoples of the world. With glowing passion they desire to worship their own national idol, to have their own nation-state. No amount of persecution and suffering can justify such abandonment of a world-mission for nationalism—another name for the very tribalism which is the origin of all their misfortunes.”

Certainly it is a far cry from the Orthodox Jewish dream of Zion restored to the realities of modern Israel. Orthodox Judaism there is practically an established state religion. The police power of the government enforces its rulings. The Orthodox rabbinate controls four cabinet posts: the Ministries of Religion, Internal Affairs, Welfare and Immigration. The decisions of rabbinical courts have equal authority with those of the civil courts. Only marriages and divorces granted by Orthodox rabbis are considered valid. The State Treasury finances the building of synagogues, mikvoth (ritual baths), yeshivoth (theological seminaries), Talmud-torahs (parochial schools) and pays the salaries of rabbis, mohels, schochets (ritual slaughterers), teachers and other religious functionaries. The importation of non-kosher food is prohibited, sabbath and holy day blue laws are rigorously enforced. There is agitation for a revival of the ancient Sanhedrin, or Council of 70 Elders, to regulate the lives of Jews throughout the world. Orthodox rabbinical bodies in the United States are on record demanding that all Jews everywhere be made subservient to the decrees of the Israeli rabbinical hierarchy.

In view of these facts, one stands aghast at the recent statements of Rabbi Judah Maimon, the Israeli Minister of Religion, who declared on his recent American tour that the State of Israel did not want to force Orthodoxy on anyone by the power of the state and that religion is strictly separated from the state, as is the rule in all democratic countries. I leave it to others more adept in the vocabulary of tergiversation to characterize this claim.

In 1943 a prominent Chicago rabbi stated: “Palestine is seething with religiosity, as poet and scholar, toiler and teacher there, testify.”

One has a right to inquire by what criteria this conclusion was reached. Some years ago, Rabbi Samuel Schulman reported to the New York Board of Rabbis after a visit to Palestine, that “there is more Judaism in New York City than in all of Palestine.” Most reliable and informed observers report that indifference and hostility to religion are rife in Israel today. The only form of Judaism recognized by the state is Orthodoxy. Rabbi Charles Shulman

spent considerable time in Israel recently. At the last Conference of Reform Rabbis, he declared that Orthodoxy has left untouched the vast majority of the population. The cynicism of many leaders in the government toward religion is notorious. Professor Joseph Klausner, a recognized authority on Israeli affairs, discussing the lack of religion in Israel, asked: "Have our prophets spoken, our sages taught and our poets sung, for Hebrew-speaking Gentiles?"

To be sure, it is still too early to pass a final judgment on the social, political, economic and religious patterns which will ultimately evolve in Israel. Let us remember that it is still an infant state. It is wrestling with enormous and difficult problems. Its population is new, heterogeneous, unintegrated and unadjusted. Rome was not built in a day, and the blueprints of the new state have not yet even been determined. Let us not withhold the word of generous commendation for the miracle of achievement that has already taken place. At the same time, however, let us not fail to recognize that what is happening there is a far cry from fulfilling the prayers of the devout, who envisaged Zion rebuilt in the context of Judaism's messianic expectations.

When we consider the impact of Zionism upon Reform Judaism, it is of the essence that we bear steadily in mind the direction which our movement took in the United States. On this soil, Judaism developed an individuality of its own. Placed in an environment which afforded more hospitality to our faith and its followers than both had ever enjoyed anywhere on earth, the whole trend of Judaism was to break down every unnecessary wall of separation between the Jew and his non-Jewish neighbor. It cannot be overemphasized that this development was not motivated by expediency or opportunism. The reforms that were instituted kept faith with the dynamics of progress inherent in classical Judaism as a religion of progressive revelation whose essential spirit could be expressed in varied external forms. We repudiated the concept that the Jews were in exile because of their sins. We ceased to pray for the restoration of the Temple and the sacrificial cult, because these prayers were hypocritical and did not express our real sentiments. We abandoned the belief in a personal messiah as unrealistic and undesirable. We rejected a great many customs and ceremonies on the grounds that they were totally irrelevant to the environment of America and the essence of Judaism. Every single reform that was introduced took account of the spiritual needs of our com-

municants as men and women of a modern age, and sought to satisfy them by means that eschewed the mechanics of ritualism as a substitute for authentic piety. The rabbis and laymen who molded Reform Judaism in America were no mere iconoclasts. They knew that in ancient Israel the priests who were concerned with sacrifices and rituals never contributed one iota to the spiritual progress of Judaism. On the contrary, for centuries they were a stumbling block to the prophets under whom Judaism finally emerged from narrow tribalism to an exalted universal faith.

Reform never inveighed against customs and ceremonies *per se*. It took the very valid and enlightened attitude that each generation must regard the past not as a model, but as a quarry from which it might appropriate materials best suited for building a temple of faith in which men and women of piety might feel at home. Reform Judaism, in the words of Samuel Schulman, always wished to "assimilate what was best in its new environment, but not to be assimilated by it."

Without tracing the successive stages of the progress of Reform in America, it will suffice to quote briefly from the famous platform adopted in 1885 in the city of Pittsburgh by a convocation of rabbis called by Kaufmann Kohler:

"... We recognize in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite... We hold that Judaism presents the highest conception of the God-idea as taught in our Holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers, in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages....

"We recognize in the Bible the record of the consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as the priest of the One God... We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only its moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.

"We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity and dress, originated in ages and under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our day is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation....

"We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and

therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state. . . .”

This document was the Magna Carta of American Reform Judaism. Under its enlightened principles there developed here the most vigorous, influential, enlightened and prosperous Jewish community the world has ever known. It gave the lie to the silly claim that only in Palestine, in a Jewish state, was it possible for a Jew to live a normal life. It created the most powerful and benevolent Jewish organizations in our four-thousand-year history. From its academies of learning successive generations of rabbis went forth to preach and teach an enlightened faith based upon prophetic, universal principles, and to break down the walls of bigotry and misunderstanding that created artificial barriers between Jews and their environment. It is not too much to say that had it not been for Reform Judaism in America, hundreds of thousands who could not find in Orthodoxy the answer to the hunger of their souls would have been lost to the synagogue and the Jewish community.

Under the impact of Zionism, Reform Judaism is experiencing a grave setback. Its forward momentum has been thrown into reverse. In 1935 the Central Conference of American Rabbis, for the first time in its history, elected a Zionist as president. It was a sense of magnanimity and fair play towards a distinguished colleague, rather than Zionist strength in the Conference, that made possible this unprecedented event. The camel had its nose under the tent and forthwith proceeded to dispossess the hospitable tenant.

By successive stages rabbinical politicians maneuvered the Conference into repudiating the Pittsburgh platform and throwing the full weight of its prestige behind the program of Jewish political nationalism. It was no idle statement that Rabbi Leon Feuer uttered at the 1948 convention of Reform Rabbis in Kansas City when he said: “We have turned our backs on so-called classical Reform.” And the president and executive director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, in his address last year to the 39th biennial council, advocated: first, that the Union definitely abandon the Pittsburgh platform; second, that it repudiate “isolationism” and “cooperate” with other Jewish groups and organizations, and third, that it re-introduce traditional customs and ceremonies long ago discarded as obsolete and irrelevant.

In the same report, the president of the Union announced that from 1943

to 1950, the organization had grown approximately 35 per cent in congregational membership; that individual memberships had increased during that period from 60,000 to "well over 110,000." Now, this is truly a phenomenal growth. It is all the more startling in view of the fact that sociologists have failed to detect on the American scene in any segment of the population any symptoms of an overwhelming surge toward religiosity. It would therefore be tremendously gratifying to discover that this increase actually denoted a spiritual tidal wave of unprecedented magnitude among American Jews. The report of the chairman of the Committee on Reform Practice, however, evaporates that flattering illusion. Prior to the convening of the Union, a questionnaire on religious observances and practice had been circulated among its constituent members. Two hundred and fifty-five replies were received, which the chairman hailed as a representative response. It was disclosed that one-eighth of the congregations presently identified with the Union celebrate Jewish holy days and major festivals for two days, practice the custom of tearing their garments for the dead, observe the dietary laws, and deny women the privilege of being counted in a quorum for religious services. One-fifth of the congregations reporting, practice the rite of the redemption of the first-born—a survival of the barbarous custom of child sacrifice. Three-fifths of the rabbis will assist in procuring a religious divorce. One-fourth celebrate Israeli Arbor Day and one-half celebrate the birthday of the State of Israel in their synagogues.

There are similar astonishing evidences that the Union of American Hebrew Congregations is rapidly forfeiting its character as the citadel of Reform Judaism.

The deterioration has been progressive and steady. In 1943 we were assured that it did not contravene the spirit of Reform Judaism to offer prayers in our synagogues for the peace of Jerusalem. Today Reform pulpits are being converted into outposts of Israeli spiritual imperialism. Reform congregations are solicited to sell and purchase Israeli bonds, celebrate the military heroes of Jerusalem, display the Israeli flag, honor the ambassadors and consuls of the "Jewish State" and exert pressure on our senators and congressmen in Washington in its interests. And at the last Union convention, the guest of honor and featured speaker at this presumably religious convocation was none other than the highest political representative of the State of Israel to the United

States, whose national flag was prominently spotlighted while the delegates to the convention were requested to rise and offer allegiance to this symbol of their mutual devotion!

One has a right to ask what all this has to do with religion. What has an Israeli flag, the *Hatikva*,¹ secular Hebrew, Israeli folk dances, political pressure tactics, the celebration of Israeli Arbor Day and the selling of Israeli bonds at religious services to do with a religious universalism whose aspirations are expressed in such sentiments as: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" and "It hath been told thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: Only to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God"?

The question of course is rhetorical. These things have nothing to do with religion, but they have a great deal to do with promoting a sense of national consciousness and community solidarity. Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof, speaking to the last graduating class of the Hebrew Union College, provides the answer: "The Zionist Movement," he said, "and a number of similar factors have added a folk-feeling to our theology. We began to be interested not, as hitherto, only in Judaism, but also in Jewishness. The place which the Commission of Social Justice occupied in the center of Conference interest, is now occupied by the Committee on Ceremonies."² What a shoddy exchange! Reform Judaism in America has sold something very valuable very cheap!

Recently, in glancing through the latest Year Book of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, I was astonished to discover that Orthodox rabbis of Orthodox congregations have been admitted to membership in the Central Conference of American Rabbis. What does this mean? Simply this: that the Conference and the Union are deliberately diluting Reform Judaism by taking in rabbis and congregations which cannot remotely be denominated "Reform." The purpose, ill-concealed behind a few rags of rationalistic camouflage, is clearly to throw a blanket of cultural homogeneity over the American Jewish community in the interests of promoting Jewish national solidarity and narrowing the bridge between Cincinnati and Tel-Aviv. In the Book of Chronicles we read that far back in Hebrew history, Judah won a war over

¹ The Israeli National Anthem.

² Solomon B. Freehof, "Each Generation and its Truth" Address to graduates Hebrew Union College, 1950, p. 9.

the Edomites, and Amaziah, the Judean king, came back in triumph to Jerusalem. And then the chronicler tells us: "He brought the gods of the Edomites with him and set them up to be his gods and prostrated himself before them and sacrificed unto them." So: he won a rousing victory and then worshipped the gods of his beaten enemy!

Reform Judaism in America is doing precisely the same thing. Why this revival of archaic orthodox ceremonies and customs which were eliminated only after a long and bitter struggle, discarded because they were superstitious survivals or irrelevant anachronisms? Do they really think that the religious anemia which afflicts American Jews can be healed by these medieval nostrums? It is as though one would call in a leech to bleed a victim of cancer, or throw out the radio and television set, and bring down from the attic the old stereopticon because modern science has failed to create a more closely-knit family life. No prescription of oriental customs and ceremonies will restore faith in men and women lacking in piety, prayer and communion with God!

If there was need for the American Council for Judaism eight years ago, that need is infinitely more urgent today. Then we protested against the exploitation of human misery as a political tool to build a Jewish state. Today we must even more emphatically protest against the exploitation of religion as a tool to support it. In the absence of effective opposition to this heresy by the dominant Jewish leadership of America, which seems unable to grasp the implications of the movements it endorses, of the propaganda that passes for culture, the need is more imperative than ever for an organization such as ours to stand for sanity, enlightenment, and all those sound and precious values which constitute our Jewish heritage in America.

I am confident that if we can succeed in making our position clear not only to the vast body of American Jews, but to our own members, our task will be immeasurably easier. Let us not be goaded by the misrepresentations and smears of the opposition into creating a false impression of what we are and what we are seeking. We have made it too easy for those who do not like us to accuse us of opposing the State of Israel and seeking to harm those who have found a home there. We must lose no opportunity to insist that we cherish the most benevolent attitude toward that state and its citizens; that we wish for them, in the same measure that we desire for ourselves, opportuni-

ties for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. *Our opposition is directed to the Zionist program of extending the principle of Jewish nationality to all Jews everywhere and investing them with obligations and responsibilities toward the state that transcend any legitimate claims of religion or philanthropy.*

Let us make it clear—emphatically clear—that we do not oppose the philanthropic program of the United Jewish Appeal. With all our hearts we wish to assist our needy fellow-Jews wherever they may be. What we do oppose, and shall continue to denounce, is the immorality of diverting to political and propaganda channels funds designated for rescue, relief and rehabilitation. Many of us are willing and eager to assist our fellow-Jews, who have suffered incredible persecution simply because they were Jews, to find security and status in Israel. Why not? No Jew sensitive to human misery, to the claims of humanity and to the precepts of benevolence which Judaism enjoins, can close his heart and hand against so urgent a need.

But we will not be dragooned into implementing the foreign policy of the State of Israel on the grounds that our destiny is bound up with the destiny of that state. The destiny of American Jews is bound up only with the destiny of the United States of America. Gladly will we assist in finding asylum for Jews who must flee from intolerable persecution. But we will not subsidize a movement and a program which either deliberately or inevitably creates situations of crisis for Jews who are secure and happy in lands where they are loyal and respected citizens.

Nationalism has been guilty of many crimes, but of all the sins which Jewish nationalism has committed, perhaps none is greater than this: it has introduced into Jewish charity the techniques of extortion, blackmail, character assassination, intimidation and boycott. It has elevated to community leadership in American Jewry men whose sole claim to distinction is their ability to write big checks or extort bigger checks from others. The People of the Book are led by people of the check-book.

Let me close with this solemn appeal:

This Council must stand firmly for Judaism. Most emphatically have we said that we are not Jews by nationality or race. We declare, and rightly, that we are a religious community. We cannot eat our cake and have it. American Jewry has a right to expect us to give more than lip service to Judaism. Our example in every community will be far more persuasive than any resolutions

we may pass or pamphlets we may write. The personal relations of every member of this Council to the institutions of Judaism in his community are far more important than the public relations of our national office. I am confident not only that the vast majority of our members share this conviction, but that enormous numbers of American Jews can be won for our cause on the basis that I urge. Despite errors of judgment and tactics, we have performed a great service. The opportunities for enlarging that service are infinitely greater if with wisdom, patience and a sense of consecration, we go forward.

SOME PRACTICAL WAYS OF APPRAISING CONDUCT¹

A FEW weeks ago, as some of you may recall, I spoke on the somewhat unorthodox theme of "The Duty of Hating." In that address I tried to point out that although hatred when misdirected is a wicked vice, it is capable of being finely employed against many evils in our personal and social life. I then went on to illustrate my point with concrete situations, and I referred repeatedly to the admonition of the prophet Amos, "Hate the evil and love the good." In all frankness let me admit that I was not entirely unprepared for the pertinent and penetrating criticism of that address which I received the other day from a thoughtful young friend. He expressed himself somewhat as follows:

"It is all well enough for you," he said, "and for other preachers to urge people to 'hate the evil and love the good.' No one can find fault with that. But it seems to me that where you fall down when you keep thundering 'do right! do right!' is that you fail to tell us just exactly what is right. Surely you must realize that the choice between right and wrong, between good and evil is not always simple and obvious. There are situations in which right and wrong, good and evil are terribly mixed up. If, therefore, after urging us always to do right, you would go on and tell us how to distinguish between right and wrong at all times, that would be helpful."

Well, anyone can see that my young friend was right about that, at any rate. Unquestionably, there are difficult situations that come up from time to time in the life of every person in which there is plenty of room for honest perplexity as to which is the right course and which the wrong. A number of factors are responsible for this circumstance, but I dare say that none is more fundamental than the fact that right and wrong are relative values. Basic principles remain permanent from generation to generation but their applications constantly change. That is because we do not live in a static world in which institutions and modes of behavior have been permanently established for all times and places. Thus, for instance, in ancient times and even in some places today, polygamy is considered a respectable institution and a man may have as many wives as he can maintain. In our western world, that practice is considered wrong, and the courts have a summary way of

¹ Delivered May 22, 1937, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

dealing with people who simultaneously have more than one wife or husband. Again, we consider murder one of the most horrible of crimes, yet we sanction it when it is committed by the state. Capital punishment is part of our criminal code. Moreover, in time of war the man who kills the greatest number of the enemy receives the most conspicuous decorations. And so one might go on to show by a variety of examples how right and wrong change their complexions with changing times and circumstances.

Take a case which came to my attention recently which concerned a university student. He had an opportunity to cheat his way through an examination. Unless he cheated he would flunk out of college and bring grief and possibly tragedy to his parents who had made tremendous sacrifices for his education. Under such circumstances, one might wonder how many people would justify and how many would condemn dishonesty. Or here is a physician attending at the birth of a child who he knows beyond all possibility of a doubt will be blind or helpless for life; or perhaps he is ministering to some unfortunate victim of an incurable disease, permanently chained to a bed of indescribable agony. To some physicians such situations present trying moral problems; that is why we have recently heard so much discussion about euthanasia. You can see, can you not, that it is not always easy to decide out of hand in every circumstance what is right and what is wrong.

It is not surprising, therefore, in the light of these considerations, that sometimes all your finely spun ethical theories break down. Philosophers have endlessly discussed abstract ideas on this subject, and the wisdom of the race has crystallized into proverbs and aphorisms intended as guides to the perplexed. I suppose that no sounder doctrine on this matter has ever been formulated than that of the old Jewish sage, Hillel: "What is hateful unto thee, do not unto thy neighbor;" a maxim which was paraphrased affirmatively in the Golden Rule of Jesus, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Now by and large that is most assuredly a splendid rule to live by, and yet there are some very estimable thinkers who question its universality. In fact, George Bernard Shaw repudiates it altogether, and says: "Don't do unto others as you would have others do unto you; your tastes might be different." Nor is our problem solved for us if we say that conscience will decide what is right and what is wrong. Every student of human nature knows that conscience is largely a matter of education and environment. The

conscience of a cannibal would not spoil his appetite for human flesh. Some of the most frightful crimes have been committed by conscientious fanatics; indeed it was their very conscientiousness that made them so dangerous. What some of us, therefore, are earnestly seeking to enable us to deal most directly and most effectively with our moral problems, are some clear and simple directions to tell us which is the right course to follow. Let me briefly, in plain and homely language, suggest two or three.

In the first place, may I suggest the test of practicality. If a man finds himself facing a real dilemma in which the temptation is great to do something which he feels is open to question, let him take a good long walk around that problem, and ask himself whether his proposed solution of it will work. That is a practical test. A good engine will work properly, a good fabric will wear well and a good building will stand up against storm and wind. There is a law of nature which all things physical must obey. You can't put up an honest building on a dishonest foundation. It simply will not do. That house will creak and groan and tremble in its joints until finally it cracks up and collapses. Now that universal law, so obvious in the physical world, holds just as true in the sphere of morals. You cannot violate the moral law and get away with it any more than you can defy the law of gravity and get off scot-free. You cannot build a life or a character on deceit and treachery and expect it to hold up. It will crack up. It won't work.

Why are there so many unhappy families and ruined homes in America to-day? You know the answer. Because impetuous infatuation is no effective substitute for love, because promiscuous sexual liaisons destroy the sanctity of home and wedlock. Let a man once set his foot on the road of any vice—it matters not what—and he has the other end of the road to reckon with. Where is it coming out? Through what detours of dishonor and degradation will it lead? What swamps of punishment and shame? Will he ever be able to regain the highway of his life and rejoin, with head held high, the loved ones he so foolishly forsook to experiment with pleasure in a fool's paradise? I beg of you, let us be practical about this. It won't work and you know it!

The test of practicality holds just as true in larger affairs as well. Everyone now recognizes what only a few penetrating minds had the vision to discern when the peace treaty ending the Great War was being slapped together at Versailles. With its gratuitous war-guilt clauses, its impossible indemnities,

its ruthless boundary re-alignments, what a monstrous heap of wrongs it forced upon vanquished and victor alike. And now we see the result: millions of men and women spurning democracy and delivered over to the bondage of dictators, communism casting its ominous shadow over the hard-won victories of freedom, economic chaos and social upheaval, and the nations bleeding their strength to nourish the sinews of the war god. Again the road to Armageddon trembles with the tread of marching millions, and the heavens grow dark with a myriad wings of destruction. Did those around the peace table actually believe that their treaty, oppressive, unjust and arbitrary, would really end the war to end all wars? Well, we know better now. It was wrong, cruelly wrong, and it didn't work.

No more will the present military madness in Europe succeed in bringing salvation to our distraught world. When will we finally learn that armed force is the weakest instrument in the world for achieving a just and lasting peace. Every historian knows that empires founded on force do not endure. No despot was ever powerful enough to maintain the equilibrium which his autocracy unbalanced. Long before Napoleon was laid in his grave, the mighty empire he had won fell to pieces, because it was only a jig-saw map pinned together by bayonets on a general's desk. Small wonder that he, the greatest wielder of force in the modern world, declared in his later days: "Do you know what amazes me more than anything else? The impotence of force to organize anything." Precisely! Nothing breeds resistance like force, and nothing requires such constant enforcement. The greater the force the greater the insecurity.

The other day the newspapers carried the gruesome story of a brutal massacre that occurred in Ethiopia. An unsuccessful attempt had been made on the life of Marshal Graziani, and in reprisal he ordered the execution of every Ethiopian found possessing firearms. More than sixteen hundred natives were tortured and killed and the entire population terrorized. Do you think that that wholesale butchery solved Italy's Ethiopian problem? Will that innocent blood fertilize the seeds of fellowship and good-will, do you suppose? Or will it cry out bitterly for redress, until sixteen hundred equally innocent Italian victims are sacrificed in the mounting cycle of slaughter?

The simple truth is that power has very definite limitations. There are certain areas of life in which it is as useless as the Empire State building would

be at the North Pole. Whenever force is applied in the field of human relations, it is completely baffled. Human relations require personality adjustments. You can beat a person into insensibility, strip him of his property, throw him into a concentration camp, banish him, torture him, hang him, crucify him; you can do all these things if you are powerful enough; and still you may fail utterly to break his spirit or destroy his ideals. How the flaming words of Zechariah illumine this truth: "Not by might and not by power, but by My spirit saith the Lord." Power can never be a substitute for justice. You can substitute one kind of power for another, electricity for steam, coal for wood, machine-power for man-power; no substitutes will do for righteousness and justice. They won't work and you can take that as your first test of right and wrong: the test of practicality. Will it work?

And a second test I would suggest to decide right from wrong is the test of disclosure. Let a man wrestling with a moral decision consider his conduct from the standpoint of its being publicly known. Is it the sort of thing you would openly talk about, unhesitatingly confide to your friends and remain indifferent if your enemies knew about it? How would you feel if the people whom you loved and respected most heard of it—your wife, your husband, your parents, your children, your admirers? Would you include it in your biography for all the world to read, or is it the sort of thing that you want to bury so deep that even your memory might banish it forever?

I should think a man would rather by far live on the edge of a volcano than live with something like that constantly haunting him. Of all the pathetic tragedies that can happen, I can think of none more terrible than this: that a person should put his life and fortunes, his happiness and peace of mind at the mercy of another's silence or the possibility of detection and disclosure. The ends of the earth must seem too near for a fugitive from the terror of his own accusing soul. Francis Thompson surely must have experienced some such awful tragedy in his own life, for he wrote in "The Hound of Heaven:"

*"In the rash lustihood of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears,
I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years—
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap . . ."*

He describes how utterly impossible it was for him to find refuge from his guilt, for

*"Still with unburrying chase,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat—
'Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me.'"*

A short time ago there were some sensational disclosures in the police department of a great city on the Pacific Coast. There were mysterious bank accounts that required involved and tedious explanations and fantastic stories of tremendous sums of money found in backyard woodpiles. Those revelations shattered the lives of make-believe and pretending of not a few men. Certain news had leaked out and the fat was in the fire. Even now there is a prominent political figure in San Francisco who is resorting to every evasion known to legal ingenuity to avoid giving testimony before the Grand Jury. Perhaps he has done nothing illegal, but one strongly suspects that he did things clandestine that cannot stand the test of disclosure.

Out there in this radio audience there surely must be some people whose teeth chatter when they consider the possibility of something they did in secret years ago becoming publicly known. Things which cannot stand the spotlight are unsound. When Alfred Smith declared that the way to eliminate the Ku Klux Klan was to drag it out into the open, he knew what he was talking about. So the Black Legion, once the cloak of furtiveness was stripped off its midnight terror, was driven to ignominious dissolution. Well, you can set this up as one of the tests you had better reckon with: "Suppose this were known?" Ralph Waldo Emerson, who could pack so much sound philosophy into a pithy phrase, said it this way: "The dice of God are always loaded. There is no such thing as concealment. Commit a crime and the earth is made of glass."

This is the conclusion of the matter. There is no absolute and inflexible criterion for right and wrong. But there are certain standards to which conduct may be advantageously referred for judgment. The tests of practicality and disclosure are tests that no one can afford to ignore. They have a massive historic vindication. Let them assist our moral judgment, and we shall not go far astray.

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ORGANIZED RELIGION TODAY?¹

IN discussing with you this afternoon the question, "What Is Happening to Organized Religion Today?" let me begin by directing your attention to the manner in which I have worded my subject. I have deliberately used the phrase "organized religion" because the qualifying adjective is of tremendous significance. There is a world of difference between religion and the church or the synagogue. Religion is a personal matter; the church is an organized institution. A man's religion is the expression of his personality, the distillation of all his intellectual and emotional processes patterned into a philosophy of life. His church is an organization into which he has been born or which he has voluntarily joined. It is the custodian of a body of ecclesiastical doctrines and customs. The difference between religion and the church is fundamental and profound. Abraham Lincoln was one of the most deeply religious men America ever produced, but he never belonged to a church. Conversely, some notorious scoundrels are church members in good standing. It is important, therefore, for us to bear this distinction in mind when we survey the panorama of contemporary life and inquire what is happening to organized religion amid the turbulent changes of our day.

It is not difficult to see what is happening to it in many European countries. The church has invariably been an accurate barometer of political and social liberty, and its status in our day is no exception. Consequently, it is not surprising that in countries dominated by dictatorships the church has been imprisoned in a straight jacket of conformity. Let us take Russia as our first illustration.

According to communist theory, religion is the opium of the masses. One of the chief objectives of the communist state was the liquidation of religious institutions and the eradication of every religious manifestation. It is a matter of common knowledge that the Communist party in Russia employed every technique conceivable to atheistic ingenuity in a determined and sustained effort to annihilate the church and synagogue. It has not yet abandoned this intention, but the realities of the situation have recently compelled the government to come to terms with the religious sensibilities of millions of Russians who insisted, despite propaganda and punishment, on maintaining their religious traditions. Accordingly in Russia today, although religious propa-

¹ Delivered March 21, 1937, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

ganda, theological seminaries and religious publications are illegal, although children under eighteen years of age are not permitted religious instruction, church services are not molested. In 1933, a census disclosed that some fifty to sixty per cent of all the churches in Russia had been closed, but a recent writer who has made a careful study of the situation declares that, although fifty million Russians have cut themselves off from all religion, there are still one hundred and eighteen million people there who are more or less under the influence of the institutions of organized religion.

In Italy, the church has capitulated to fascism. Despite the fact that some of the finest pronouncements on social justice in modern times have emanated from the Vatican, it was significant that Mussolini's rape of Ethiopia was executed with clerical benediction and ecclesiastical fanfare. There is an irreconcilable conflict between fascist totalitarianism and the Kingdom of God, but in Italy it has been apparent that the organized church has reconciled this dilemma and accepted its assignment in the program of regimentation which is the way of dictatorship.

And in Germany, of course, organized religion is waging a life and death encounter with the new paganism. The only freedom permitted the church in Germany is freedom to agree with the government. A report of November, 1936, says that all boys between the ages of ten and eighteen and all girls from ten to twenty-one must join the Hitler Youth Movement, of which Baldur Von Schirach is the leader. Not long ago he said, "The enemies of the Hitler Youth are those who crawl on their hands and knees and spend their time in prayer and church attendance. We Hitler Youth have only contempt for these young people who still run to their Catholic and Protestant Clubs and devote themselves to ridiculous and superfluous religious emotionalism." Comment on this astounding declaration is superfluous. Just as in Russia, where religion is made a target for scorn and insult, so in Germany every degrading epithet in the vocabulary of vilification is being hurled at Catholics, Protestants and communicants of other churches who still cling to the idea that Jesus Christ is more deserving of their loyalty and love than Hitler, Goering and Goebbels. But, to the everlasting glory of Christianity, let it be said that one of the most heroic chapters in the history of religious steadfastness is today being written by Protestant and Catholic leaders who are defying Nazi tyranny and, with astounding heroism, risking barbaric reprisals.

When we turn from these unprepossessing scenes abroad to survey the situation at home, we are struck by a recent report in the *Christian Herald* church census, reprinted in the January number of *Fortune* magazine. According to this statement, "the church membership in the past ten years has increased in the United States faster than the population, and is now about sixty-two million, seven hundred thousand strong." These figures are impressive. They contradict the popular opinion that the church is losing ground and influence. Those who find consolation in numbers have here a sustaining fact to support their confidence in the vitality of religion in America. Chesterton, in his autobiography, wrote that a solemn friend of his grandfather used to go for walks on Sunday carrying a prayerbook, without the least intention of going to church. He calmly defended it by saying, with uplifted hand, that he did it as an example to others. One wonders how many of these sixty-two million, seven hundred thousand church members—and synagogues are included, too—reported in the *Christian Herald* census, share the conventional point of view of grandfather Chesterton's friend. Indeed, one wonders how many of them even have prayerbooks!

The fact of the matter, as every minister knows, is that many of the old motives which led people to join the church have disappeared. Under the irresistible impact of the new knowledge, during recent decades there has come about an attitude toward religion that is unprecedented in the experience of the race. To begin with, the old theology has been abandoned by millions of men and women in our day. The doctrine of supernatural revelation, formerly a cornerstone of the old faith, has either been entirely surrendered or so liberally interpreted as to bear little relation to its former meaning. The scientific study of the Bible has shattered irreparably for multitudes the old conception of infallibility which that book once possessed. The miracles are no longer believed in as literal historical fact, nor is conduct today motivated by fear of eternal damnation or promise of celestial reward. Religion, you see, is a social institution, subject to the same laws of development and change which govern all human institutions. It is, therefore, inevitable that the thinking of modern man, with reference to religious truth, reflects the spiritual and intellectual climate of the age.

What are our young people thinking and saying about all this? Well, when modern youth looks at religion, it finds itself in a quandary. It knows religion

historically through the record of the past, a record which is not free from glaring shortcomings and abuses. Organized religion has all too frequently lent aid and encouragement to reactionary influences which for centuries opposed the highest interests of man and conspired to entrench a privileged minority in its dominance over the masses of men. E. Stanley Jones, writing in *The Christian Century*, reminds us of a striking instance of this attitude: "At the time of the Russian revolution, a conference of priests was being held at Moscow. They debated for two days whether at a certain place in the service the priest should wear a yellow or a white robe. Within five blocks of that debate, firing was taking place in the counter-revolution. Religion was taken up with splendid trivialities while a great national crisis was on. Had religion been a prophet of the new instead of a priest of the old, Russia today might be a religious instead of an anti-religious people. Religion was called to the judgment bar, and it was not able adequately to meet that call."

Youth has little patience with religious dogmas and creeds. Particularly in this age of inquiry, when the canons of the scientific method are being applied in every department of human knowledge, youth refuses to accept on faith anything that reason persuades it to reject as false. Not that youth is lacking in faith; it has unlimited confidence in itself and in the tremendous possibilities of personality. Youth has faith in life as a glorious adventure and in the thrilling goals that beckon in the distance. But faith that means only credulity, faith that requires the abdication of reason, of these youth is intolerant. That is why fundamentalism in every religion is on the defensive; that is why creeds and dogmas based on the miraculous must ultimately fall. Youth will not have the rationality of its world-picture distorted by theological superstitions and pagan theories that conflict sharply with common sense.

If modern youth, therefore, looks askance at organized religion, let a representative of organized religion be the first to admit that organized religion itself is in great measure to blame. Most of the consolations which religion in the past has offered man were other-worldly. For the most part the felicities which they promised lay beyond the tomb. The salvation of the individual soul in the hereafter was emphasized to the neglect of salvation of humanity on this earth. Today men and women are interested much more in the here-and-now than in the hereafter and eternity. So is the modern liberal church

and synagogue. I submit that such an attitude is by no means irreligious. A man is not a pagan or an atheist because he is satisfied with one world at a time. This much is certain: that unless people are willing to stand up and battle for ideals, for ethical and moral and spiritual values and their realization in society, everything that is culturally valuable in the tradition of the race will go to the ruthless and unprincipled.

What I would like to point out to our young people today who are adopting an attitude of indifferentism toward the institutions of organized religion, is that such an attitude is superficial and anti-social. No one yet ever solved a problem by turning away from it. Every step of progress that humanity has taken out of the darkness of antedeluvian ignorance has been achieved by men who were impatient, to be sure, with the institutions of their day, but who did not on that account disdainfully disassociate themselves from them. On the contrary, they found there a challenge. So instead of simply ridiculing alchemy as nonsense and abandoning all interest in science, young men eager for progress went into the laboratories with a will and transformed alchemy into chemistry and physics. So astrology was tackled by impatient spirits not content with negative criticism and indifference, and now astronomy is one of the most socially valuable of modern sciences. You may depend upon it that this world will never be redeemed through indifferentism or destructive criticism. No more can organized religion adapt itself effectively to serve the needs of modern life without the earnest and intelligent participation of thoughtful people who will not be content with an attitude of careless or impatient indifference.

Our world today is divided into two opposing and irreconcilable camps engaged in a life and death struggle. On one side are the advocates of power, of force, of ruthlessness; and on the other the champions of timeless ideals embodied in the classic religious and moral traditions represented by Judaism and Christianity. The new paganism of the totalitarian state has flung the gauntlet of defiance in the face of the old classic tradition represented by the historic religions of mankind and the democratic state. Our civilization cannot endure half slave and half free. The choice is between the theories of force, militarism, racialism, dictatorship and the ideals of the spirit—the sanctity of human personality, the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. You cannot remain indifferent as to which ultimately triumphs.

The new paganism, represented in state absolutism, proclaims the supremacy of force. Its goal is conquest through military power. Its supreme ruler, the ultimate authority, is the Fuehrer, the Duce or the Commissar. Now under the Jewish and Christian tradition, we recognize a higher authority. Our King of Kings is no earthly or temporal ruler; our highest allegiance is to God. With us the sanctity of human personality takes precedence over regimentation and totalitarianism. The goal of our teaching is not the supremacy of the nation through conquest, but the universal reign of righteousness through justice. The authoritarian state is bent on destroying civil liberties and, as Cardinal Mundelein said last week, "it is determined on forcing youthful candidates for religious life into labor and military camps." Under our dispensation, freedom of speech, liberty of thought and conscience are indispensable to human welfare and happiness. We affirm the principle of love: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The new despotism extols the virtues of hatred, of class struggle, and menaces with an iron fist the advocates of peace and goodwill. We speak of the dignity of the individual. To us every human soul is precious in the sight of God. The new gospel herds men like robots into mass conformity and inflexible regimentation.

Now between these two opposing philosophies the future of civilization is going to be decided. If religion and the church appear so frequently in the news that comes from the front line trenches in this conflict, it is because organized religion has a tremendous stake in the issue. A church that is not free is a mockery. If the new paganism now menacing the world achieves its objectives, you may depend upon it that the new symbols of Judaism and Christianity will be not the Star of David and the Cross, but a set of chains.

In this hour of great crisis for all humanity, it would appear to most reasonable men that the institutions which are making the fight for sanity, for freedom, for democracy, ought to be supported and strengthened by all who share these ideals. The other day Mr. Stanley Baldwin, addressing an audience of seven thousand young men and women in London, pointed out that they were the trustees of the heritage transmitted to them by the past. "Every compromise," he said, "with the infinite value of the human soul leads straight back to savagery and to the jungle. Dispel the truths of our religion and what follows? The insolence of dominion and the cruelty of despotism. Denounce religion as the opium of the people, and you will swiftly proceed to denounce

political and civil liberty as opium. Freedom of speech goes, intolerance follows and justice is no more." Well, anyone who follows the tide of affairs abroad, knows that Britain's Prime Minister has not overdrawn the picture. The modern church and synagogue are the custodians of the highest values in civilization. Their effort is directed toward making this world a better place in which to live. Their appeal is to the heroic in human nature, their challenge to the noblest instincts. In such a cause youth cannot but be passionately interested.

Religions may die as they have died before, but religion will persist. The hunger for God, the quest for beauty, truth and righteousness are eternal. Let our young men and women enlist their enthusiasm and cooperation in this sacred cause, that through our united efforts the institutions of religion may continue as a mighty force for righteousness and a bulwark of democracy and freedom.

RELEASING OUR LATENT ENERGIES¹

ONE of the fundamental principles of Judaism is the belief in the perfectibility of human nature. Were we convinced that man is hopelessly corrupt and incurably wicked, that he is irretrievably in the grip of evil forces beyond his ability to master, the prospects for the improvement of the individual and society would be dark indeed. Judaism affirms with emphatic insistence that every individual (within the limits of environment and heredity) has autonomy and jurisdiction over his moral life. Emile Zola, in "The Débacle," has a vivid scene in which an engineer is struck dead at the throttle of his locomotive, leaving his train to go roaring madly on through the night. Without free will and discipline, man's moral life like that train would be beyond his control. Our religion insists that to a great extent every man can be the master of his fate and the captain of his soul.

There is an old story in the Book of Judges which affords an excellent illustration of the means by which our latent capacities for heroic living can be brought to the surface. The Jewish state had been conquered by the kingdom of Midian. The victorious invaders swarmed over the land, striking terror into the hearts of the demoralized Israelites, adding insult and humiliation to the bitterness of defeat. One day when the farmer's son Gideon was threshing his wheat in a hideout where he might be safe from the rapacious Midianites, he found himself suddenly confronted by an angel who said: "Go thou in thy strength and save Israel from the hand of Midian. The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor."

Now Gideon was probably the last person in the world to whom such a description would apply. He was of humble birth, timid, untried and thoroughly cowed. One suspects that if any of his neighbors had heard him addressed as a "mighty man of valor," they would have howled in derision. The very idea of Gideon in the role of a national hero would have struck them as absurd. But Gideon had hidden resources which those magic words unlocked. If you continue the narrative in the sixth chapter of the Book of Judges, you will read how that obscure and frightened farmer's son obeyed the summons of the mysterious voice and became one of the great champions of ancient Israel.

¹ Delivered May 23, 1936, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

Like so many Bible stories, this tale points a universal truth. Every man carries within him unexplored capacities for heroic action. Bulwer Lytton accounts for the genius of Rienzi, the great Roman tribune, by saying that in youth he heard the voice of a mystic Pythia whispering to his soul, "Thou shalt be great!" and thenceforth his whole life was directed toward the fulfillment of the prophecy. No man ever reveals himself completely without the inspiration of an irresistible stimulus. We are all capable of infinitely more than we exhibit. Far beneath the rushing tide of consciousness, like precious gems imbedded deep in the earth, there lie concealed in every man such latent powers as he himself scarcely dreams of. If only we knew the magic word, the "open sesame" to unlock them, and send us out into life with the challenge and assurance: "Thou mighty man of valor."

There are intimations of genius in the fantasies of childhood. That lad whom you saw yesterday playing at being an electrical wizard, and that little girl who pounded the keys of her piano as though she were a celebrated virtuoso, are both revealing prophetic portents of talents that intelligent cultivation might immortalize. Just as a child recapitulates the biological history of the race, so every man is a microcosm containing infinite spiritual possibilities. Even in his daydreams and posturizing, the heroic roles he plays are unconscious revelations of potential greatness. No man ever built a castle in the air except the raw materials for its actual construction were imbedded in his personality, waiting upon the appropriate incentive to whisper to his soul, "Go thou in thy strength, thou mighty man of valor."

Some time ago when I was in Oregon, I visited the site of the new dam that is being built at Bonneville on the Columbia River. Impressed by the stupendousness of the project, I turned to my guide and said, "That is a tremendous power which you are creating here!" With a smile, he replied, "We are creating nothing—the power is all there; we are only harnessing it." Of course he was right. For centuries the Columbia River has contained titanic forces capable of transforming the entire northwest. The force was always there but it had to be harnessed. The forces in the ether which make possible the radio and wireless have existed since the dawn of creation. Marconi harnessed them. When Robert Fulton built his steamboat he did not add a jot or tittle to the potential energy of the universe. He harnessed forces that were there. When Wilbur Wright made his epoch-making flight around the Statue

of Liberty and revolutionized the transportation techniques of civilization, he did not create so much as a single atom of original energy. The forces he used were all there waiting to be harnessed.

This truth so obvious in the physical world is equally true of man's spiritual nature. Every man carries within himself tremendous forces that are waiting to be harnessed. Just see how the newer schools of education recognize this point of view. The modern educator no longer regards the child's mind as a "tabula rasa"—a blank surface—to be filled with pedagogical hieroglyphics, or as a sausage-casing to be stuffed full of academic dry-rot, but rather as a tremendous reservoir of cultural possibilities. You see how that goes back to the original etymology of the term "education" which comes from the Latin "educō," to bring out. The talents are all inherent in man. Education does not create them; it simply discloses them. Now and again a genius appears with a rare gift for revealing the hidden forces of the human spirit and you have a Moses testifying to man's keen love of liberty, an Aristotle revealing the intellectual genius of the race, a Michaelangelo demonstrating its talent for artistic expression, a Shakespeare disclosing its imaginative faculties, a Lincoln embodying its gentleness and strength. None of these men created new forces. They tapped the resources of the human spirit. They fulfilled the qualities of their nature; they harnessed the tremendous powers of personality!

If someone now says, "Surely this rabbi cannot mean that every human being is a potential genius," I answer, "Most likely not!" All I am insisting upon is that every man carries within himself reserves of spiritual strength and endowments of natural ability which are rarely exploited. Very few of us succeed in getting out the best that is in us. Some years ago an obscure actor was erroneously reported dead. He had the extraordinary experience of seeing his own obituary one morning in the newspapers. This was what he read: "Not a great actor, but invaluable in small parts." Not everyone, to be sure, is capable of reaching the heights of genius, but we can be invaluable in small parts. Sometimes when I talk to young people who are preparing themselves to face life in this generation that worships at the shrine of efficiency, I put this question to them: "What would you think of a man who owned a twelve-cylinder car and was satisfied with two-cylinder performance?" You know the answer to that question. Yet there are innumerable young people growing up today who are saying to themselves, "How little must I do to get

by?" when what they should be saying is, "How can I get out of myself the most that is in me?" Oh! that I might say it so that someone this afternoon could hear: "Go thou in thy strength, thou mighty man of valor."

There is a widespread opinion that the good life demands the constant repression of normal and natural instincts. Goodness has somehow gotten associated in the minds of many people with repressions and inhibitions. Well, that theory derives from an ancient belief in the inherent wickedness of human nature. What I am pleading for is not repression but on the contrary, for self-expression, glorious, abundant, and complete self-expression. Probably no term in our modern vocabulary has been subjected to more abuse than that word self-expression. Every rake employs it to justify his moral laxity. It is particularly in vogue among neo-pagans whose moral standards are notoriously elastic. Self-expression does not mean vulgarity and loose-living, any more than liberty means libertinism and license. Freedom can exist only where self-discipline has taken hold. In order to express himself fully, a man must first be master of himself. He must prove that he can ride herd upon those things in his nature which inhibit the free and triumphant flow of his particular genius. Every great achievement of the race was made possible because somewhere somebody was willing to forego a temporary satisfaction for the sake of an ultimate objective. Let a man find a cause to serve, a goal to strive for, a standard of excellence to achieve, and he will discipline all his energies that he may express himself fully in terms of his heart's desire.

Let us consider a few of the forces and influences which thus help a man to uncover his hidden sources of strength and reveal the best that is in him.

To begin with, there are friends. Often when a man has lost faith in himself, when defeat and discouragement have shattered his morale, when he has lost that confidence and buoyancy which are indispensable for adventurous living, a friend will come along and lift him out of the slough of despond to set him on his feet again. A friend can often do for us what an intelligent football coach does to a disheartened team. When the odds against us seem insuperable, when our energies are almost at an end and we are ready to cry quits, he can assemble the broken fragments of our courage, and fill us with an unconquerable confidence in our ability to go out and win. The emergence of many a personality from the limbo of mediocrity can often be traced to the encouraging confidence of some friend who saw in us powers and possibilities that we never knew we possessed.

Friendship, however, is often a two-edged sword. It can bring out the best that is in us but it can also encourage the worst. Let a man be on his guard against those friends from whose companionship he can gain nothing sound and ennobling. Such friends debase the currency of friendship. They are in reality merely confederates in trivial and time-killing pursuits. Many a man has thrown away the high promise of his character and ability by consorting with a coterie who never inspired him to a single noble impulse or worthy deed. Such associations profane the name of friendship. They are in reality mutual degradation societies.

Just as there are some people in every man's acquaintance who rub him the wrong way, who provoke his meaner nature and draw out his ignoble qualities, there are others who draw forth from the silent deeps of his spirit qualities of rare excellence and strength. A worthy friendship can tap deep springs of accomplishment in a man's soul and give him access to latent energies that lie hidden within him.

Very often a worthy ambition in life acts as a similar incentive. It gives a character solid foundation and overarches it with shining stars of aspiration. To want something fine and to want it eagerly, passionately, steadily, is to supply life with a drive and a purpose. Once the ambition to discover the North Pole took hold of Peary, no obstacles could daunt him. For over twenty years he persisted in his purpose to unfurl the flag of his country at the North Pole. "Long ago," he once remarked, "I ceased to think of myself save as an instrument for the attainment of that end." Once a man has found a cause to which he can attach himself, a purpose to which he can dedicate himself, an ideal toward which he can bend his aspirations, every day brings the thrilling discovery of forces and capacities in his personality of whose existence he was unaware. Whenever you find a person for whom the joy has gone out of living, who finds existence a bore and nothing worthwhile, you can make up your mind that you have met someone who has no unfulfilled desire, no attainable ambition to realize. Therefore I say, and I say it especially to the young people who may be listening in, cultivate an ambition in life, want something fine, something worthy of the best that is in you, and you will be surprised by the strength of your powers to achieve it.

In the third place, suffering and tragedy can very often disclose the best that is in us. Kinship with sorrow often brings to the surface the most beauti-

ful attributes of personality. It can make one kind and gentle, considerate and loyal. Just as a blade of Damascus must be forged and tempered in a fiery furnace, so many a rare personality is created through tragedy and sorrow. A man who has not suffered hunger cannot fathom the suffering of the starved. Very often it takes an inner seismic disturbance of catastrophic proportions to shatter the stratified layers of our complacency and smugness, and thrust to the surface of personality long latent capacities for heroic living.

That can happen to a people, too. It happened to mine. Israel, say the Rabbis in the Midrash, may be likened to the olive. Just as the olive yields its precious oil only under pressure, so the Jew has produced some of his finest contributions to culture under the duress of affliction and trial. Over in Germany today there are Jews who have been led through persecution and sorrow to a nobler conception of living and a finer appreciation of life's enduring values.

The pity of it is that there are so many Jews who never discover the inspirational potential of our Jewish tradition. Not very long ago a renowned American sociologist published a challenge to Israel. He deplored the moral confusion and ethical anarchy in contemporary life and said that Israel alone of all the peoples on earth through its tradition of discipline and consecration might bring order and brotherliness into this chaotic and groping world. No truer word was ever uttered. We could be, in Isaiah's graphic language, the "saving remnant" again today, even as we salvaged civilization from barbarism in times gone by. That fiery passion for Godliness, for social justice and human brotherhood, may have frozen up in many Jewish veins today, but it still lives. It is there. We only need the magic word to unlock it and send it fiercely coursing through our blood. Oh, if we could but speak that word to our souls, what heights might we not attain, what service might we not achieve! "Go thou in thy strength, thou mighty man of valor."

And this brings us directly and finally to the matter of religious faith as a tremendous influence in bringing out the best that is in us. To have a deep conviction about God, to believe that human life has spiritual origins, spiritual backing, and spiritual destiny, is to possess an inexhaustible source of confidence and courage. Our ancient sages, whose faith was often tried by bitter and brutal experience, crystallized this religious philosophy in many talmudic aphorisms. "Let a man embark upon a high and lofty purpose,"

they said, "and all the spiritual forces in the universe will rally to his assistance." What comparable power has the atheist who looks upon all human striving as a "tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." What inspiration for exalted living can a man have if he feels that he is only a fugitive microbe accidentally hatched on a speck of stardust that is whirling fortuitously through meaningless space to no purpose? Small wonder that there is so much cynicism and irreverence in contemporary life when doctrines such as these reduce everything to impotent futility. But the man who feels that God is holding the steering wheel of this planet and guiding it to ends not of our knowing but assured nonetheless, can ally himself confidently with the spiritual forces in the universe, harness them to his chariot, and go on to the heights of triumphant living.

Let me conclude by reminding you of the etymology of our Hebrew word for sin. That word is *chet*, and it is derived from a root which means to miss the mark. I suppose there is not a single one of us this afternoon who has not fallen short of his highest possibilities, who has not missed the mark of worthy achievement and fine living to which his complete personality might legitimately aspire. Of this I am convinced, that somewhere, in friendship or ambition, in suffering or religious faith, there is a magic word which can unlock those deep and hidden sources of strength, can harness them to exalted purposes and send us forth, like Gideon, with a challenge singing in our hearts, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor."

THE GOOD OLD DAYS¹

IN speaking to you this afternoon on the subject "The Good Old Days," I should like to set our thought against the background of a verse in the Book of Ecclesiastes, "Do not say, 'why is it that the former days were better than these?' for it is not out of wisdom that thou puttest this question." Those words are supposed to have been written by King Solomon. The Rabbis said that when he was a young man he wrote the Song of Songs; when he reached middle age he wrote the Book of Proverbs; and when he was very old he wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes. Now, as a matter of fact, King Solomon did not write any of these three books; but if he had written them, in all likelihood he would have written the Song of Songs when he was young and the Book of Proverbs when he reached maturity, and Ecclesiastes when he became a very old man, because the Book of Ecclesiastes exudes the spirit of disillusionment. In all probability its unknown author lived around the third century before the Common Era during a period of gloom and profound travail in Jewish history. Then, as now, depressions produced pessimism; and at that time of deep distress and tragedy there must have been a great many people longing for a return of the good old days that had apparently passed away forever. They were disillusioned with all the false messiahs and impractical panaceas that had promised them the return of their earlier prosperity; and so one supposes from the verse in Ecclesiastes that many people were asking in the querulous inflections of defeatism, "Why is it that the former days were better than these?"

The question is a superficial one. It did not require the fabled wisdom of a Solomon to meet it with the rebuke that it deserved: "It is not out of wisdom that thou puttest this question." And yet every generation has repeated it. Adam probably asked it of Eve the day after the world was made, and all their descendants have been asking it ever since. Confronted with pressing problems and lacking competence to meet them, we seek refuge from reality in day-dreaming or futile romanticism.

That is happening to millions of people today. A mood of pessimism dominates their lives. Still groggy from the body blows of the depression, perplexed by economic uncertainties, bewildered by the hectic tempo of modern life, confused by the clashing claims of democracy and communism and fas-

¹Delivered May 8, 1937, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

cism, baffled by the intricate problems that encompass them—problems financial and problems political, problems religious and problems domestic—they heave a sigh of deep despair and yearn for a return to the good old days of yesterday, the days of long ago. They will tell you that then life was pleasanter and easier, one's livelihood was more secure, public life was more honorable, neighbors were more reliable, friendship was more sincere, women were more modest, children were better mannered and morals were on a higher plane. With sentimental fervor, they repeat the poet's refrain:

*"Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years!
I am so weary of toil and of tears—
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain—
Take them and give me my childhood again!"*

Now there is no denying the fact that sometimes such a reminiscent mood may be justified. You can understand it in the case of those who are overwhelmed by sorrow and misfortune, who have experienced some great calamity which has swept away the piers to which their lives were moored. If such unhappy people look back wistfully for the return of the good old days of long ago, it is only natural and understandable. But, in any case, it is not the part of wisdom to permit such reflections to become fixed and constant. Such a mood may be a transient visitor by the fireside on a winter's night in the evening of life; it should never take permanent residence in a mind that ought to be alert and active. A man cannot strike the hammer of ambition against the anvil of life if his thoughts are turned backward upon a mythical golden age in a romantic past.

I know that there is a distinguished group of modern thinkers who seriously maintain that civilization achieved its zenith in the past, and is now rapidly sinking toward an imminent nadir. The very titles of their books proclaim frustration: "The Decline of the West," "The Rising Tide of Color," "The Tragic Sense of Life," "The Decline of Europe." To be sure, only a foolish optimist intoxicated with Couéism would be blind to the malignancies in modern civilization which threaten its survival. Perhaps our social order is headed toward destruction. Perhaps Mr. Spengler is right when he says that it will crack up and go to pieces. Of one thing, however, we may be sure: that if it does smash itself with the instruments of its own efficiency, it will

deserve its doom. It will deserve it because here and now our generation has a chance to save it and, if we fail, we shall have no one but ourselves to blame.

For one thing, we have a chance to stop war. No thoughtful person can look out on our world today and fail to see that we are surely headed for an international conflict of such titanic proportions as will make the World War seem like a Sunday school picnic. Every European nation is armed to the teeth; the largest standing armies in the history of the world are being assembled and made ready. Even England, after more than ten years of studied economy and careful social planning, has dumped the whole thing overboard and adopted a rearmament program calling for an expenditure of about seven and one-half billion dollars in the next three years. Is it any wonder then that the thought which most disturbs reflective people today is not that the golden age of mankind lies behind us, but that some day a handful of our surviving children shall dig themselves out of the bloody wreckage of our civilization and wish that they had the chance that is in our hands today.

Again, we have a chance today to build a social order that will be decently concerned with the welfare and happiness of every man, woman and child. Surely, by this time, it must be apparent to everyone that something was very seriously the matter with the economic system of the good old days of long ago. Let's be realistic about this. There is something fundamentally wrong with an economic system that cannot provide employment for millions upon millions of employable men and women who want to work. There is something seriously awry with a rugged individualism that consigns great masses of people to the shadows of poverty and want, that permits food and clothing to rot in warehouses while children go naked and starving. Dictatorship, whether it be of the communist or fascist variety, has been the answer, and it is only a tentative answer, to this crucial problem in some European states. To me, both systems are abhorrent. The feudalism of the Middle Ages was preferable in many ways to the political and economic slavery that prevails today in Russia, Italy and Germany. I hate communism. I am too much in love with liberty to have any sympathy for it. I have an uncompromising resentment against its ruthless suppressions of free speech, free thought and free assembly, but I am not terribly worried about the likelihood of communism in America today. All this shrill and hysterical shouting against communism is a noisy irrelevance in the face of the far greater and more imminent

danger of fascism. When respect for law and order is successfully flouted by militant organized minorities, when the constitutional right of the Executive to modify the Supreme Court is employed as an expedient for circumventing the intent of the Constitution, then indeed the fate of democracy trembles in the balance and the road is cleared for fascist dictatorship. Today we have it in our hands to preserve democracy. Tomorrow our children may wish they had that chance.

Moreover, this thought moves in upon us from the larger areas in which we have been applying it and touches our personal lives intimately. Thus, for example, tomorrow is Mother's Day, and we shall be hearing a great many brave and eloquent expressions of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country.

Something is surely lacking in the child who has never in imagination built a dream castle for his mother, storming high heaven for treasures to lay at her feet, shielding her declining years with all the golden glory that this world contains. Somewhere, three thousand miles away on the other side of this continent, my own mother is listening in this afternoon, and I suspect that she remembers with a wistful smile how, as a boy, I exhausted all the superlatives in the vocabulary of day-dreaming when together we planned a future that I know now would require paradise for its fulfillment. "For you, mother," wrote Rabindranath Tagore, "I must have the casket and jewels that cost seven kings their kingdoms," and in that exquisite line he epitomized all the ardent and boundless filial devotion which is the reflection of mother-love in the heart of a faithful child.

Now that kind of devotion represents a beautiful sentiment, to be sure, but certainly it is much more than that. Every intelligent mother must know that such an overwhelming attachment is not only a source of gratification to be enjoyed, but a tremendous force to be directed. Niagara Falls is one of the most magnificent spectacles in the world, but it has much more than scenic value. Men harness those rushing waters and transmute their glory into titanic powers that change the face of a continent and the destiny of a nation. Just so can mother-love become much more than a poetic sentiment. Wisely directed, it can be a fulcrum with which to lift a child out of the lower levels of pedestrian living to a high plateau of thought and striving so that his life becomes significant and worthy. Millions of mothers in America have that

opportunity with their children today. Tomorrow, when it is too late, they may wish they had it in their hands again.

Let me return again to the thought with which I commenced this address: the absurdity of believing that everything worthwhile has already been achieved in the past. I want to emphasize the fallacy of that attitude, particularly for the young people who may be listening in this afternoon. You may remember that as a youth Alexander the Great was unhappy because his father, Philip, was winning so many victories. He feared that there might be nothing left for him to conquer. Anyone who has read the exploits of Alexander the Great knows how utterly unfounded was that youthful apprehension. Grown to manhood his achievements far outstripped his father's. In his last book, "Unfinished Business," published just before he died, Lincoln Steffens wrote that his attention was attracted to a leaking faucet in his home. He tried to shut off the water but failed. Summoning his young son Peter, he said, "Pete, turn it off." Pete tried and tried until the veins on his neck stood out. "What's the trouble?" asked his father. Pete looked up at him grinning and replied, "Grown-ups." "Of course," observed Lincoln Steffens, "the boy was right. His elders had not yet made a fit faucet. That means there is a job waiting for Pete and his generation in the plumbing business." In 1896, Marconi succeeded, after years of prodigious effort, in sending a wireless message about two miles. That experiment transformed the world and opened up jobs for millions. When Henry Ford perfected the first low-priced car he created millions of jobs. Every time an airplane crashes or a school-house burns, a piano goes off-key, or a bridge safety-net snaps, that means there is a job for some young person growing up in America today. The headlines in the newspapers are a daily commentary on the inefficiency and ineptness of our generation. But underscore this: the youth who surrenders to a spirit of disillusionment and pessimism regarding his opportunities will never contribute anything worthwhile to human welfare or discover through hard work and achievement the secret of happiness. Every age provides new opportunities for sturdy hearts and willing hands, for those whose eyes are turned not backward, but forward, who

*"Act, act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!"*

THE ILLUSION AND THE REALITY¹

SOMEWHERE I have read of an experience which befell a distinguished anthropologist while he was spending a few years among the savages of the Upper Amazon in South America. He had been suddenly called back to civilization and with the help of the chief and a few trained attendants, he attempted a forced march of three days to the nearest settlement. Without grumbling, the party made extraordinary speed for the first day, and the second. On the third morning, however, when it was time to start, the explorer found all the natives sitting on their haunches looking very solemn and making no preparations to move. Inquiring the reason for this inactivity, he received this startling answer from the chief: "They are waiting. They cannot move farther until their souls have caught up with their bodies."

I

During these momentous days, when the whole structure of our national life is being subjected to the strains and stresses of our turbulent times, the thoughts of men are being more and more directed to a serious survey of the course taken by America since first it received its charter of democracy. The rapidly accelerated tempo of events has hurried us along so swiftly on the career of our national destiny that we are in grave danger of leaving far behind that vision of America which was the inspiration of the Founding Fathers. Our souls have not kept pace with our bodies.

One who reads the story of the founding of the Republic is impressed by the idealism that accompanied its birth. Unless the Revolution had been forged in the glowing and passionate dedication of the American colonies to an inspiring ideal, unless it had been constantly sustained and reinforced by the willing and uncompromising devotion of that heroic generation, the emergence of our free institutions would have been an impossibility. To be sure, there were then, as now, men who exploit patriotism for personal profit, who turn the tragedy of a sacrificial people into the cornerstone of a great private fortune, but on the whole, the Revolution was motivated by great principles, and drew its dynamic and unconquerable impetus from the stirring ideals of its leaders. Those were the days when Patrick Henry thundered the nation's defiance at the throne of the British lion, when Thomas Jefferson indited with

¹Delivered May 30, 1936, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

fearless hand a new manifesto of human rights, when John Adams rephrased in violent eloquence the eternal cry of the soul for freedom, when the embattled farmer at Concord fired the shot heard round the world. And when, after seven years of agonizing conflict, the fledgling nation emerged victorious, it set its feet confidently on the path of democratic government it had traced with its blood in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

One hundred and fifty years have rolled by since the events of those stirring days. The far-reaching changes that have occurred during that period have been more profound and kaleidoscopic than those of any other century and a half in the history of man. Economics, industry, government, science, education, politics, art, religion—no field of human endeavor, no institution of society has been exempt from the mighty changes that the years have wrought. Bit by bit the vision of the Founding Fathers and the dream of America have been invaded and mutilated. The inexorable process of historic change has made appalling inroads upon the generous promise that America proclaimed to the world. The early high-born hope that on these shores at last could be conceived and perpetuated a government of free men with equal opportunity and privilege has been mocked again and again by the glaring disparities and tragic inequalities in American life. The highest claims of freedom are challenged by powerful reactionaries and Black Legion Night Riders. Liberty is the catch phrase of the demagogue. Militant minorities dictate their wants and whims to subservient legislators, and Congress is crowded with intellectual midgets and vociferous yes-men. The farmer degenerates to peasantry, and ten or twelve millions of free and equal American workers vainly seek that opportunity to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness which is the constitutional guarantee of every citizen. Before this, democracies have perished. Popular government has no guarantee of immortality. Unless we can speedily recapture that early vision of Washington and Jefferson and Lincoln, the words of Isaiah may be the epitaph of our Republic: "*And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty.*"

II

Some years ago, as we recall on this Memorial Day when we salute our heroic dead, a war was fought to end all wars. True enough, it began in the conventional European way over a dispute concerning spheres of influence,

national honor, economic interests and the usual considerations which in the euphemistic language of diplomacy are called "sacred rights of nations." Until America entered that conflict, there was nothing about it to make it particularly distinguishable from the interminable bloody messes which for centuries had decimated the populations of Europe and fertilized its soil. But with the entrance of our country into the World War, mankind was promised a new deal. If any of you is so hopelessly cynical that he can confront disillusionment without succumbing to melancholia, may I suggest a re-reading of some of President Wilson's war utterances. I have recently been glancing through a volume containing formal speeches and occasional addresses which he wrote during and just after the war. "The heart of the world is awake," he declared. "There is no reason why nations should be divided in the support of justice . . . And this war will decide that wars ought to be stopped." And again, listen to this optimistic effusion: "The Europe that I left the other day," he told a Boston audience in 1919, "was full of something that it had never felt fill its heart so full before. It was full of hope. It would not resume the old life that Europe had led, led in fear, led in anxiety, led in constant suspicious watchfulness. It is a Europe of settled peace and of justified hope."

A Europe of settled peace and justified hope, indeed! France today has a standing army of nearly 7,000,000 soldiers, more than Germany recruited in the zenith of her militarism; Russia has an army of 19,000,000 men; more than six and a half million mark time to martial airs in Italy; Czechoslovakia has a million and three-quarters under arms, and day and night the steady tramp of marching feet resounds in every German city, town and hamlet. Thirty-seven and a half million casualties of the great World War, twelve billion dollars of war debts still owing the United States by European nations and yet, behold the mad competition in military armaments and preparations for war! Do you know how much our country is spending on military preparations this year? One billion two hundred million dollars. Think of it! A sum greater than we spent to maintain every department of government the year before the war to end war. One billion two hundred million dollars for militarism, but "when the appropriation for the State Department comes before Congress," says Senator Nye, "calling for a paltry thirteen million dollars to maintain that great department for a year, vociferous objections arise. If anyone should be so foolhardy," continues the Senator, "as to propose an additional

million to enable the Secretary of State to enlarge upon his activities in the name of world peace, he would be laughed off his feet."

This year the world is spending more than six billion dollars for armaments, almost twice as much as in the years before the World War. "A new Europe of settled peace and of justified hope!" Across the Pacific the rattle of Japanese machine-guns punctuates with ominous defiance her astounding truculence; Mussolini has just completed the most immoral aggression in history and the League of Nations is rapidly becoming only a memory. Again the war god thunders and on this Memorial Day the ghosts of our betrayed dead steal back to their dishonored graves. A world safe for democracy! A warless world of brotherhood and peace! "*And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty.*"

III

Until a few years ago our land enjoyed a prosperity such as had never before been dreamed of. People were acquiring new motor cars, fancy tiled bathrooms, summer homes and town houses, expensive yachts and easy divorces, with a legerdemain and rapidity that was remarkable—while it lasted. Not only was poverty about to be permanently deported as an unwelcome alien in our midst, but there was to be a chicken in every pot, and two cars in every garage. The day of the silk-shirted hod-carrier had arrived, and the millenium was just around the corner.

Under an economy which flouted all the conservative formulas of economics and prostituted its monetary system to serve a gambler's purpose, an economy in which the virtues of patience, thrift, intelligence, and industry were set at naught, and the richest rewards fell to the luckiest speculators, it is not surprising that an orgy of fantastic and artificial values came into being. Personalities and egos were inflated as well as commodity prices, and the astonishing antics of parvenus clambering desperately into the new heaven of opulence was a sight fit to make the gods laugh. Whirl was king, and the new neo-paganism introduced the worship of a myriad tinsel gods upon whose altars short-sighted sensation-seekers carelessly tossed away many a fine virtue and worthwhile trait of character.

Then came the crash and the awakening! I fancy that the dazed inhabitants of those ancient cities which in the biblical legend God destroyed, must have

looked upon the havoc of the first thunderbolt with such startled bewilderment as was displayed by many of us when our houses of ticker-tape collapsed. We had builded upon sands that were shifting; the broken reeds upon which we leaned snapped at our grasp. Six years of perplexity and confusion have finally convinced the most incurably romantic among us that the dream of effortless paradise was only a vagrant illusion. The hand of reality has rent the veil asunder, and the world has awakened from the anesthesia of false prosperity to find that not only its pocket, but its soul is empty. "*And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty.*"

IV

If I repeatedly return with deliberate reiteration to emphasize this text, it is because I am profoundly convinced that this Old Testament verse succinctly mirrors the tragic disillusionment of modern civilization. Ever since the day when James Watt perfected his steam engine and propelled our western world into the irresistible current of the Industrial Revolution, the energies of men have been employed in multiplying the means and techniques of living. Units of power have been endlessly multiplied to form gargantuan forces; physical masses have been skillfully fused into titanic aggregations of energy; machines, factories, mechanical devices, scientific apparatus, and all the ingenious paraphernalia of a triumphant technology have been marshalled with astounding wizardry for the subjugation of the physical universe. The means for living in this "economy of abundance" as Stuart Chase calls the modern order, the means for living are abundant and well-defined, and yet our world-order is threatened with collapse because we have ignored and flouted the ends for which we live.

One need not be a confirmed pessimist to question the theory of human progress in the light of our blundering misuse of the means by which we live. We have perfected communication to the point where a man's voice before a microphone can be heard in a distant continent, but when you tune in, the chances are that he will be preaching a doctrine of racial intolerance or crooning a sentimental ditty dedicated to a new facial cream. We have conquered the frozen stretches of the poles but are still strangers to old lands nearby. We have contrived ingenious marvels of steel and iron, herculean sinews of titanic might, to tame the elemental things of nature, but have not yet found the

simple, gentle ways of peace to tame the bestial part of human nature. What doth it profit a generation if it gain the whole world of means by which to live, and lose its soul, the spiritual ends for which to live. "*And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty.*"

V

Moreover, let no one suppose for one moment that this penetrating text exhausts itself in such sweeping generalizations concerning the larger issues of organized society as I have already suggested. This old biblical simile walks up to the doorstep of every individual with a personal challenge. The great trouble with so many of us is that we fail to exercise a critical selectivity in the pursuits to which we devote our lives. Here we have a surpassingly wonderful heritage of culture and art, of music and poetry, of religion and literature—all the precious gifts that the inspired of the race have transmitted to our day, and only a limited time in which to develop a full and completely integrated life.

We had better not be so indiscriminating in the uses to which we put our time. There comes a day in the life of every man and woman when he looks back upon the road he has traveled, takes inventory of the months that were wasted and the years that were frittered away, and yearns with futile longing for the return of golden opportunities that were carelessly tossed aside. Here is a father who has spent his whole life at money-making. To be sure, he has provided adequately for the physical welfare of his family—he has clothed their bodies and fed their appetites and paid for their pleasures, but what has he given them of himself? Must not such a man in his reflective moments realize that for all his generosity he is stranger to his own? Or here is a mother—affectionate, kind and unmistakably attached to her husband and children. Her housekeeping is as correct as her bridge and her children's company manners—she knows all the conventions. But for all her efficiency, she has mechanized her personal relationships as thoroughly as her domestic arrangements—she is managing an establishment but failing to create a home. Don't think for a moment that the day will not come when she will ruefully contemplate the superficial results of her mechanical motherhood "as when a hungry man dreameth and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty."

Why is it, one is frequently asked, that so many people find no place in

their lives for religion until they have reached old age? To reply that fear of death inspires their piety is frivolous and unconvincing. Far more persuasive is the explanation that one who has lived long and seen much, suffered tragedy and enjoyed deep delight, has distilled from the chemistry of experience a true understanding of life's enduring values. Such a one knows the pitiful inadequacy of power and wealth and position, and every transient boon that petty men prize dearly. In the evening of life, when the clamor of the busy world is hushed, and the twilight hour of contemplation comes, bringing with it as compensation for physical infirmity a keener insight into the realm of the spirit, first things are put first; and on one side, not scanted but properly esteemed as only incidental and ephemeral are ranged life's lesser values with the legend "*and it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth and behold he eateth, but awaketh and his soul is empty.*"

SHORT-CUTS TO UTOPIA¹

IN discussing with you the theme “Short-Cuts to Utopia,” I should like to set our thought against the background of an incident in the early history of Israel recorded in the Book of Exodus. There we read that when the Lord brought the children of Israel up out of Egypt He did not lead them into the Promised Land through the country of the Philistines, although that was the shortest way. Had they taken the short-cut they could have covered the distance in eleven days. But Moses led them by a round about route through the wilderness, so that instead of completing their journey in eleven days it took them forty years to reach their destination.

One may well inquire into the reasons for this long and strange detour. What hidden purpose inspired Moses to delay the impetuous drive of the people toward the land flowing with milk and honey? Why did he deliberately interpose between their emancipation in Egypt and their destination in Palestine an experience involving forty years of sustained hardship and suffering? The scriptural suggestion that the sight of war in Philistia might have unnerved them is hardly adequate explanation—did they not on the longer route have to fight the fierce Amalekites and in addition suffer hunger and thirst and deprivation of all creature comforts?

I suspect that the real reason behind the strategy of Moses was that he had a long term program in view. The goal to which he had dedicated his life was a democratic commonwealth based upon respect for human rights and liberties, undergirded by reverence for law and order, and overarched by universal ideals of justice and peace. Now Moses was too much the realistic statesman to entertain the naive notion that such a project could be completed in a hurry. That task required the disciplined co-operation of an enlightened community, the unspectacular processes of orderly progress. And the reason why those ancient Hebrews were led through forty years of soul-searching and character-building privation was to prepare them properly for their historic destiny. There is no short-cut to the Promised Land!

All history corroborates this ancient wisdom. This is a moral universe, in which nothing valuable can be achieved or maintained without commensurate effort. Every child knows that before you can erect a building you must first lay the foundations. They must be adequate and firm, honest and sure.

¹Delivered April 20, 1940, “Message of Israel” program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

Unless their integrity is sound, what possible confidence can be put in the super-structure built upon them. Depend upon it, that building will not stand. The first hurricane will expose its unreliability and bring it down in ruins. Don't think for a moment that this principle is limited to the professional techniques of architects and engineers. It is a universal law that pervades with all-inclusive comprehensiveness every human relationship and every aspect of society. Whether it be a successful career that you seek or a home and family life that is joyous and radiant, whether it be the satisfactions of art or music or literature, or the sustaining power of a great religious faith; whether the goal be a community united in a common devotion to the highest loyalties of the human spirit, or a world-wide confederation of nations dedicated to the preservation of a just and lasting peace—the principle remains eternally and forever the same—the foundations must be properly laid. There is no short-cut to the Promised Land!

I suppose there is no one listening in this afternoon who could not bear witness to the everlasting accuracy of this proposition. Just see how tragically and impressively it is being demonstrated under our very eyes by recent events in Europe. Why did the Russian program for a society more democratic than any that the world had ever known end up so speedily in a dictatorship more ruthless than the most autocratic despotisms of antiquity? Because the Russian people for centuries had been inured to tyranny, brutalized by repression and untutored in the art of self-government. Why did the Weimar Republic in Germany founder so quickly in the storm of Nazi revolution? Because the seeds of liberalism never took firm root in German soil and the teutonic spirit had never been prepared to resist the blandishments of tyranny and the mesmerism of raucous demagogues.

The Bible tells us that when the Israelites, just out of Egypt, ran into trouble in the wilderness, a great cry arose for a return to the flesh-pots of Egypt. But you know how Moses dealt with that situation. He would not permit his people to exchange their new freedom for economic security. Nor did he offer them any crack-pot formulas or quick and easy solutions for their difficulties. He did not throw a helpless and defenseless minority to the mob as a scape-goat for misfortunes of which they were completely innocent and in which they shared equally with the rest. He rejected these unsound short-cuts to Utopia, and despite intrigue and rebellion, hunger and want, he forged ahead

and established a commonwealth which has given to Western civilization its highest ideals of religion and morality.

In the second place, it is quite possible that Moses avoided the territory of the Philistines because he wanted to elude the contamination of their barbarism. When we bear in mind the qualities associated with philistinism in our modern use of the term we can perhaps better appreciate the reasons for Moses' decision. Webster's New International Dictionary describes a philistine as "a person lacking culture and refinement; one who does not appreciate the nobler aspirations and sentiments of humanity; a person who rejects enlightenment or is indifferent to the higher intellectual interests." Matthew Arnold has pointed out that civilization is a contest between the forces of sweetness and light on the one hand and ignorance and obscurantism on the other, the ignorance and obscurantism that is identified with philistinism. And Moses did not lead the children of Israel through the land of the Philistines because he knew how dangerously seductive were their methods, how powerfully they appealed to the prejudices and passions of the mob, and he knew, moreover, that if our forefathers tried to imitate those vulgar patterns of conduct, they would never achieve the Promised Land. They would never found a theocracy based upon reverence for the moral law and respect for the sanctity of human personality.

You see, do you not, the deadly parallel between that ancient situation and the choice which confronts our world today. The philistines still walk the earth, although to be sure, they bear different names in our time. There are states today, powerful and articulate, whose ideals and techniques are diametrically opposed to everything which utopian dreamers, from the days of Micah and Jesus, of Plato and Thomas More, down to Bellamy, have envisaged as the ideal goals of society. The doctrine of brute force is a philistine doctrine; the doctrine of race superiority is a philistine conceit. The doctrine of militarism is philistine fist-brandishing. The doctrine of state supremacy which annihilates the rights of the individual is a philistine survival in modern civilization.

Like a child tinkering with a toy that has gone out of gear and being unable to repair it loses patience and dashes it to pieces as the shortest solution to his dilemma, so the modern advocates of ruthlessness and "schrecklichkeit" smash the fine fittings of civilized society in search of a short-cut to Utopia.

Utopia, in the third place, is not a gift that can be bestowed upon society. It is a privilege that must be won. It demands arduous disciplines, heroic sacrifices, inflexible loyalties and unswerving fidelity to a fixed purpose. One day a young student came to Elsner, a teacher of music in Warsaw, seeking instruction. At the conclusion of their first interview, Elsner wrote this note in his diary: "Chopin, Frederic; third year student; musical composition; amazing capabilities; musical genius." That was the equipment with which Chopin began his career. But before Chopin could become the immortal master that the world of culture admires and reveres, it meant a great deal of hard work, you may be sure. It meant innumerable discouraging hours, you may be sure of that. It meant no compromise with an artistic conscience that was exacting and demanding to the utmost limit.

My friends, there never has been an artist, an inventor, a writer, a statesman, who achieved anything worth-while by the short-cut method. Behind that triumph and that success, whether it be the scientist in his laboratory, or the thinker wrestling with intellectual problems—you may depend upon it that there were long and bitter hours of agonized travail. There were the pangs of creative effort. When Lindbergh startled the world by flying from New York to Paris, do you think that that was an extemporized excursion? We know better. We know the years of painstaking preparation and incredible devotion to detail that preceded that historic feat. There are no short-cuts to the Promised Land. No formula can substitute for these inflexible and inexorable conditions of sound achievement: discipline, sacrifice, loyalty and devotion to a fixed purpose.

Do we Jews believe in our historic destiny? Do we believe in the ultimate victory of our cause for all mankind? There is no short-cut to that consummation. For centuries we have borne the burdens that men have laid upon us, and God knows perhaps for added centuries we will have to bend our shoulders to the task. There is no short-cut to the realization of the messianic dreams and visions of our inspired prophets. Do Christians really believe in a world won for Christ? That his ideals and ethics will ultimately achieve the Kingdom of God on earth? Well, there is no easy formula for that kind of social salvation. Like that ancient Galilean prophet, they, too, will have to carry the cross amid hostility and scorn, in a world unfriendly to the message of peace and good-will.

Is there a youth out there this afternoon who aspires to great deeds—who has envisaged for himself a high career? Depend upon it, there is no short-cut to that achievement. You will have to lay the foundations for it strong and deep. You will have to make sacrifices. You will have to conquer conflicting impulses and temptations—to discipline your character for the achievement of your heart's desire. And even then you may fall short of your goal, but your life will not have been a failure. It will have been lived in the spirit of courage, of loyalty and faith, and by example and influence have given impetus to that power which ultimately will achieve God's Kingdom on earth.

WHEN A MAN TAKES RELIGION SERIOUSLY¹

THE chief problem that religion faces in our day is not hostility. To be sure, here and there throughout the world there are highly organized and vigorously active efforts to destroy religion and its institutions, but even where these are most intensive, they are not motivated by antagonism to religion itself. Almost without exception, the attack on religion nowadays is only an incidental skirmish in a general assault upon the entire structure of society.

Certainly in our own country religion has much less cause to be concerned about its enemies than it has to be disappointed in its friends. Atheism is not a major problem; apathy is. The trouble is not that people are hostile toward religion, it is that they are indifferent to it. Their attitude in this respect is very much like their feeling about Einstein's theory of relativity or the possibility that Mars is inhabited—not antagonistic, not resentful, not even contradictory—merely indifferent. And therein lies a graver threat to the dignity and decency of human life than is offered by the combined forces of all the atheists in the world.

But someone now may object to this indictment of indifferentism and offer statistics to prove that it is unfounded. The *World Almanac* for 1940 publishes figures on the estimated church membership in our country in 1938—the most recent reliable data available. According to this source, there were then in the United States about fifty-two and one-half million persons who claimed affiliation with the Protestant and Catholic churches and Jewish synagogue. In addition to these, there were several million belonging to other denominations. Now these figures are enormously impressive, but they are just as enormously misleading. If anyone thinks they constitute a true index of the earnestness and seriousness with which we take our religion, he will go sadly astray. There is a tremendous amount of conventional religion in America today. Millions of people do indeed belong to churches and synagogues, but that does not mean that religion has taken possession of their lives. They do indeed with unrelenting generosity and not infrequently with pleasure, contribute to the maintenance of ecclesiastical institutions, but their support is much more adequately financial than affirmatively spiritual. There is a great deal of vicarious religion in America today. You let your newspaper editor do your thinking

¹ Delivered April 6, 1940, "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

for you, you let your party bosses do your voting for you, and you let your minister do your praying for you—in absentia. Perhaps, when it is not too inconvenient, you send the children to Sunday school. There is a great deal of mechanical religion in America today. Multitudes who know the creeds and commandments by heart have never taken them to heart. They know all the appropriate responses in the liturgy, but they have never learned the appropriate responses to human need. And there is no lack of academic religion in America today. Innumerable thoughtful people have decided the issue between a Godless mechanistic universe and a Divine Creator in favor of the latter, but that does not mean that they take religion seriously. It means only that they offer intellectual hospitality to the God-idea. It is part of a process of thinking, no part of a pattern of living.

I think we had better face this problem realistically. The simple truth of the matter is that behind an imposing column of figures about religion we are sheltering an enormous number of figurative religionists. By far too many of us are taking religion apathetically, conventionally, vicariously, mechanically, and intellectually. Not nearly enough of us are taking it seriously. We are treating with perfunctory nonchalance and patronizing tolerance the only effective force that has a fighting chance against the evils that are stalking the world.

This is a bad time for people to be apathetic to religion. There are too many influences and pressure groups at work in our time bent on the destruction of values precious to the human spirit which religion protects. Say what you will about the shortcomings of our churches and synagogues, criticize them as they deserve to be criticized for their imperfections and conservatisms, their incongruities and anachronisms, when you have fired your last salvo of remonstrance you still have to deal with the fact that church and synagogue are the custodians of a classic religious tradition which proclaims above all else the inviolability of the moral law and the sanctity of human personality. These are the twin pillars upon which liberty builds her stronghold. Destroy them and you extirpate every decent standard of civilized living which the human race has achieved since the first man, “red in tooth and claw,” emerged from his jungle lair. Take a good long thoughtful look at the methods employed by contemporary barbarians to enslave whole populations and unleash upon the world a fury greater than hell! For the authority of the moral law

they substitute the arbitrary expediency of the Duce, Commissar, and Fuehrer, and in place of the dignity and worth of the human spirit they proclaim the absolute and total domination of the state. No wonder that they are compelled to use every weapon in the arsenal of persecution against religion and its classic institutions in order to achieve their purpose. For religion is the sentinel of freedom, and if we care enough about freedom to protect it, we will take religion seriously.

In the second place, it must now be apparent even to the most intransigent secularist that the instruments upon which we have hitherto relied to further human progress have miserably failed us. There is a moving passage in the Book of Job, in which the tragic hero of that drama gives eloquent expression to his bitter disillusionment when the friends upon whom he had relied for sympathy and assistance turn against him in his hour of need. Professor Buttenwieser's translation preserves the poetry and pathos of the original Hebrew text:

*"My brethren have disappointed me like the
mountain streams,
Like water-courses that pass away."*

Unless you have been in Palestine you cannot grasp the full implication of that simile. About two years ago I traveled by motor from Jerusalem to Jericho. The intense heat of the midday sun was relieved by a sudden downpour, which quickly turned the sun-baked channels of the mountain brooks into rushing rivulets, affording drink to the caravans that happened by. Returning over the same route two hours later, I was amazed to find not a drop of water in those river bottoms. It is not difficult to imagine the disappointment of the desert traveler who counts on these streams to slake his thirst, and then finds them dry.

Well, I submit that modern man may well re-echo Job's lament as regards the things on which he had staked his confident hopes for a better world. The Industrial Revolution was supposed to inaugurate the millenium. Millions of disinherited and unemployed testify to the vanity of that prophecy. Science was hailed as the messianic solvent of our woes. Poison gas, bombing-planes, submarines, and the propaganda of hatred that encircles the globe with the velocity of light-waves have made a mockery of that hope. Education was to

bring security and happiness to men and banish evil from the earth, but see how the forces of wickedness have turned their post-graduate cunning into higher degrees of blasphemy and terror. No wonder that our age is perplexed and apprehensive! A tide of disenchantment has parted the cables to which its argosies of golden hopes were fastened.

On sober reflection, is it not luminously clear that our frustration was inevitable? Factories, inventions, and knowledge are supremely unconcerned with the uses to which they are put. By the limitations of their nature they can never be anything more than instruments and means. The purposes they serve will always be determined by the society that employs them.

Under the circumstances, the most desperate need of our world today is for men of character. I would be the last person to depreciate the gifts of science, but we could manage, for a while at least, to get along with what we already have. Certainly no rabbi, whose religious tradition exalts enlightenment, will minimize the blessings of knowledge, but civilization will not go to pieces for lack of adding to our present store of learning. What we do need, however, in this troubled generation, is more kindness and justice, more friendliness and goodwill, more integrity and virtue, more decency and honor—in short, more men and women of high character. And that means religion. For it is the business of religion, not to build factories and industries, not to experiment in laboratories and develop new fields of learning, but to build men of conscience and character who will lovingly and prayerfully employ these instruments, in the language of our liturgy, “For the good of all and the hurt of none.” If only a man would take religion seriously!

Finally, this thought breaks away from the larger areas with which we have been dealing and marches directly into every individual soul. Religion is much more than theology. It is not limited to intellectual formulations of faith, and abstract speculation concerning the inscrutable. It is intimately personal and vitally real, clamorous with resounding affirmations which enable men to meet life with dignity and courage.

Carl Sandburg relates an anecdote about Rufus Choate, who took his daughter to a grand opera performance in a foreign language. He told her to be sure to let him know when to laugh or cry, or just sit still and keep cool. He had no trouble in distinguishing the words that were being sung, but he had not the slightest idea what they meant. He needed help, so he turned to his

daughter and said, "Interpret for me the libretto, lest I dilate with the wrong emotions."

All over this country today there are millions of men and women completely demoralized by worry and fear. The economic and social and political uncertainties of our time have preyed upon them with such devastating consequences that they have lost even the last frayed remnants of a balanced and healthy perspective on life. They cannot understand the garbled libretto of the contemporary scene, and they are dilating with the wrong emotions. They are poisoning the minds of their children with suspicion and cynicism, and equipping them for the battle of life with inferiority complexes which will curse them to the grave with crippling scars.

And on this Message of Israel program let a rabbi suggest the message of Israel for our troubled time. This is not the first encounter with adversity that my people have faced. Suffering and sorrow are more than footnotes in the voluminous and heroic epic of Judaism. If we have stood at the cradle and the grave of empires and kingdoms innumerable through all the centuries, it was because the genius of our faith evolved a technique to fortify our souls against the world's distemper . . . "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," "The Lord is my shepherd . . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil." It was that high faith alone which gave our fathers strength and courage to match the evils of their day. But it was not an extemporized faith. It was no apathetic nor conventional, no vicarious nor academic religion. It was an unconquerable conviction that man's puny strength can draw endlessly upon the infinite resources of the Eternal Spirit. And that faith can work in us today, as it did in the unconquered spirit of our fathers, a transforming miracle of dignity and courage, if, like them, we take religion seriously.

HOW MUCH DO WE WANT LIBERTY?¹

IT is not in the least surprising that the Fathers of the American Republic derived a great many of their ideas on government from the Hebrew Scriptures. They were, for the most part, deeply religious men. The Bible was the best-known book in their libraries. Their knowledge of the Old Testament was reflected not only in the state papers and orations of the period but in the principles of free government which they enunciated in the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. For example, on the same day when the Declaration of Independence was signed, a distinguished committee consisting of Franklin, Adams and Jefferson, which had been appointed to submit a design for a Great Seal of the United States, brought in its report. The report was accepted, and so on the first Great Seal of our nation there appeared the picture of King Pharaoh and his cohorts drowning in the Red Sea, while on the bank, framed in a halo of glory, stood Moses and the newly emancipated Israelites. Around the rim of the seal ran the legend "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." And when those same Founding Fathers came to select the motto for the Liberty Bell, which has become one of the treasured symbols of our freedom, they chose as the most appropriate quotation a verse from the Book of Leviticus: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof."

These patriotic reminiscences are evoked by the circumstance that commencing on Monday night next and lasting for seven days, the faithful in Israel will celebrate the Passover. Its theme is liberty. It commemorates with feast and story, with song and prayer, the release of the ancient Hebrews from Egyptian slavery. That first emancipation in recorded history proved to be one of the turning points in the destiny of mankind. When Moses, speaking in the name of the Eternal Spirit, demanded the release of the Hebrew slaves, saying, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me," he formulated for the first time the principle that human rights take precedence over property rights. That was an epoch-making and a revolutionary declaration. Moreover, had the Israelites not been freed from Egyptian bondage, the Ten Commandments would never have been given; the Bible, including the New Testament as well as the Old would never have been written; the Hebrews

¹Delivered April 13, 1940, "Message of Israel" program, coast-to-coast network, National Broadcasting Company.

would have been absorbed into the population of Egypt, and Christianity and Mohammedanism would never have been born.

One need not be a believer in religion to appreciate the enormous significance of Moses in human history. Even a skeptic who dismisses the miraculous elements in the biblical account of the Exodus as the romantic exaggeration of a pious scribe, cannot plausibly deny the essential fact of the liberation from Egypt. For more than four centuries the Hebrews had been slaves. Anyone who has ever stood in the shadow of the Pyramids or looked upon the massive ruins of the temple at Luxor can appreciate the fact that those ancient Hebrews were of considerable economic importance to their Egyptian masters. One can readily imagine the tremendous obstacles which Moses had to surmount before he could achieve the independence of his people—the resistance of their rulers, the servile timidity of his brethren, the jealousy of rival leaders, the bitter enmity of the privileged classes. Himself of royal status, he might have enjoyed the luxury of the idle rich and contemplated with serene detachment a system of human degradation of which he was the beneficiary. He chose instead to fill a more heroic role. He cared enough for liberty to make that choice.

We are living in one of those crucial periods in which the principle of human freedom must face anew the challenge of a cruel and truculent illiberalism. All the values of the human spirit which civilized men hold dear and honorable are threatened with extinction by a force more sinister and ruthless, more powerful and determined than any which our world has ever known. In one country after another the brutal fist of tyranny has crushed the heritage of humane and cultured living which is the finest flower of the free spirit of man. Every marvelous device which science has made available for the extension of human happiness and freedom, is turned with savagery and staggering might into an instrument for the annihilation of those precious possessions. Mile by mile the frontiers of liberty are shrinking as the victorious hosts of destruction press their evil gains.

The number of free countries is growing smaller. Some have chosen dictatorship; others have had it forced upon them; still others, through the stern demands of military necessity, have been obliged to submit to it. Nor is there any neutral nation in the world today, howsoever far removed from the actual theatre of war, whose liberties are not threatened. Tyranny is wearing many

alluring disguises nowadays in her competition with the Goddess of Liberty. Her cheeks are rouged with false prosperity to trap the unwary with an appearance of health, and her solicitation is often phrased in the plagiarized vocabulary of patriotism. Believe me she is a dangerous courtesan, and never more seductive than in a time when unemployment walks the streets in run-down shoes, and men are bewildered and desperate. Will we in America fall a prey to that snare? Despite the pressure of propaganda and the compulsion of a contracting economy, will we maintain and defend our democratic institutions? That is the crucial question which our generation must face and answer.

Now a man does not have to be a prophet to realize that our answer to that question will depend on how much we want liberty. How highly do we value it? What price are we prepared to pay for it? The men and women who bequeathed it to us as the most precious quality of American life held it worthy of their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. They renounced some very delightful creature comforts and abdicated not a few attractive selfish privileges that the blessings of freedom might be more generally extended. How much do we want liberty?

In the first place, do we want liberty intelligently enough to recognize that government and economics are inseparable? Liberty is not to be had merely for the asking. It cannot be produced out of an empty political slogan the way a magician pulls a rabbit out of an empty hat. How much liberty does a man have when he is continually harassed by uncertainty and want? What meaning has freedom of opportunity when every door to gainful employment is closed?

The other day one of my friends, a thoughtful observer of the contemporary scene, put it this way: "90 per cent of the American people," said he, "would readily exchange the Bill of Rights for economic security." Well, if he is right, we had best see to it that 90 per cent, or even a substantial fraction of that number, are not driven by necessity to that desperate choice. Nevertheless, freedom to starve or freedom to register for relief is not the American conception of liberty. To be sure, we have travelled a considerable distance during the last few difficult years along the road of enlightened social legislation, and the provisions we have made for unemployment relief, old-age pensions, minimum wages, and the like testify to a growing acceptance of the principle that government must be deeply concerned with the economic welfare of the

people. And that, let me remind you, is no new theory in our national life. Jefferson championed it; Madison fought for it; Patrick Henry gave it all his celebrated eloquence. Our freedom is not menaced half so much by over-publicized Communists as it is by undernourished Americans. We need not fear hard-working Fascists nearly as much as Americans who have no work at all.

Write this down and think about it: The greatest menace to democracy is insecurity and want. If the millions of our unemployed and their dependents care enough about liberty to stand by and tighten their belts until we can work this problem out, we can preserve liberty in America. If government can make our boundless resources serve the greatest good of the greatest number, we can, within the framework of the existing order, retain our freedom. How much do we want liberty?

In the second place, do we care enough about liberty to subordinate our lesser loyalties for its preservation? Josiah Royce, in his "Philosophy of Loyalty" reminds us of one of the most stirring episodes in English history. In 1642 there was a conflict between Charles I and the House of Commons. The King requested the surrender of those men who were most actively opposing him but the House refused to give them up and reminded the King of its traditional prerogatives by which the House alone had jurisdiction over its members. Thereupon the King resolved to have his way by force. The next day, accompanied by an armed guard, he proceeded to the House, and handed the presiding officer a list of the men he wished to arrest, with the curt demand: "Mr. Speaker, do you espy these persons in the House?" What followed made history. The Speaker kneeled before his sovereign, and in calm, firm tones replied: "Your Majesty, I am the Speaker of this House, and being such, I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak, save as this House shall command, and I humbly beg Your Majesty's pardon if this is the only answer that I can give to Your Majesty."

Well, there you have a dramatic instance of a conflict between loyalties in which the lesser gave way to the greater. The Speaker and the men sought by the King belonged, for all we know, to opposing political factions. It is quite likely that they had their differences and disagreements on many policies and issues, but when the fundamentals of democratic government were challenged, they closed the ranks. The higher loyalty had the right of way!

Let no one listening in this evening suppose that he is outside the circle of

this matter. Each one of us, in the words of Emerson, is a bundle of relations. Just see how we fragmentize our lives and mortgage out our loyalties: into political parties, fraternal organizations, trade unions, industrial associations, religious denominations—what an endless and varied multitude of affiliations lay imperious claims upon us. “This is the axe you must grind,” they say—“Remember that you are a Democrat,” or “Put Republicanism First” or “The Workers must stand firm” or “Industry must have a clear field.” What sort of clamor is this at a time when the pillars of the temple are trembling! Some years ago in California a quarterback gave the wrong signals, and the ball was run clear down the field to the opponent’s goal for an opposition touchdown. There are too many quarterbacks out there calling the wrong signals—running the ball in the wrong direction. The forces that threaten republican government today are powerful and unscrupulous. It will take the best teamwork we can manage to beat them. Let us give America the right of way! This is a time to think and act not merely as Republicans and Democrats, labor-leaders or Captains of Industry, workers or employers, Jews or Christians—but as Americans. How much do we want liberty?

To be sure, this does not mean that we must surrender our honest convictions or refuse to tolerate the opinions of those who differ with us. To do that would create the very tyranny we would destroy. That is exactly what has happened in Russia and Germany and Italy and that is why we say, “Thank God for America!” Only as we keep America safe for differences can we keep it safe for freedom. Remember the words of Wendell Phillips: “If there is anything in the universe that can’t stand discussion, let it crack.” You may not like what that revolutionary radical is saying any more than I do, but so long as he has not put himself outside the protection of our laws, he has a right to speak. You have the right to differ. That is the American way. You may not approve of your neighbor’s conduct any more than he approves of yours—that does not entitle you to tar and feather him and run him out of town. The Ku Kluxers and Vigilantes who make so brave a show behind their masks at night against the helpless victims of their cruelty, have learned, it seems, much more from Hitler and Stalin than from Washington and Lincoln. They constitute by far a greater menace to America than all the Christian Fronts and Bunds from coast to coast. Remember those immortal words of Lincoln: “Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves, and under

the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it.” How much tolerance do we want? Do we want it only for our own opinions, and not for the opinions of others? How much law and order do we want? Do we want it only for our own protection, and not for the protection of our neighbors? How much freedom do we want? Do we want it only for white men, and not for black and yellow? How much do we want liberty?

Finally this question leads directly to the heart of a world situation that touches intimately the life of each of us. Do we cherish liberty enough to refuse to risk its destruction in a war overseas? Make no mistake about this, my friends, the moment our nation enters a foreign war, you can bid adieu to the Goddess of Liberty. Her statue in New York harbor may not even be there to greet our soldiers coming home—if there are any left to come home. War demands dictatorship for its efficient waging. It demands the total resources, spiritual as well as material, of a nation. And in return it gives back corpses, blind and crippled sons and husbands, starvation, bankruptcy, unemployment and dictatorship.

You blind men, fumbling with your broom-straws in the Veterans Hospital that overlooks the Golden Gate, whose shimmering glory you can never know—you won the last war! You share-croppers, scratching the dry crust of earth for crumbs to feed your wives and children—you won the last war! You bankers and brokers whose war profits built such costly tombs for your gassed and shattered sons—do you hear me? You *won* the last war! Thousands slain and hopelessly mangled; 200 billions of property destroyed; a national debt of 40 billions, ten millions of unemployed—and who can count the cost in human suffering and the destruction of spiritual values! And we won the war!

A man does not have to be an isolationist, or even neutral in his heart to stand against American participation in this war. God grant that it may speedily end, and be succeeded by a just and lasting peace. To that end we can best contribute if we keep our sanity in a world gone mad. And we can keep our freedom too. If ever our own shores should be threatened by an invading foe, we shall know how to meet that challenge. But as we value liberty, we shall resist the siren voices that would lure us to its destruction. Have we so soon forgotten the surging tide of starved and angry voices in our city streets after the last war? Seeking democracy for the world, we barely saved it for ourselves. Next time we may not fare so well. The dice are loaded in this game. How much do we want liberty?

THE JEWISH PROBLEM RECONSIDERED¹

*"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God,
That I will send a famine in the land,
Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,
But of hearing the words of the Lord.
And they shall wander from sea to sea,
And from the north even to the east;
They shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord,
And shall not find it."*

INFORMED students of social trends in America report that since V-J Day anti-Semitism has greatly increased in our country. Indeed, so alarming are the symptoms of the resurgence of this social malady that a national conference of Jewish leaders in America has been called in St. Louis for the first week in January to consider ways and means of coping with the situation. Against this background, I propose to consider with you this morning the Jewish problem in America. The subject is neither novel nor original.

When Abram shattered the idols of Terah, his father, and persuaded his family to join him in renouncing the state religion of Babylon, I suspect that Nimrod, who was king, called an emergency meeting of his advisors to discuss the Jewish problem.

Pharaoh had a Jewish problem. The Book of Exodus goes into considerable detail concerning the manner in which he dealt with it. Centuries later, Ahasuerus had a Jewish problem. Without it he would in all likelihood never have been heard of. The Book of Esther preserves the record of the way in which he handled that situation.

In every age the Jewish problem has recurred with a regularity almost as predictable as an eclipse. Indeed, in many ways it is an eclipse. What is an eclipse? An eclipse is an astronomical phenomenon caused by the moon obscuring the sun so that its light is removed. Similarly, in times of stress, when the light of reason fails men grope for a way out of their dilemma, and when all other avenues of escape fail they create a Jewish problem.

Professor Arthur H. Compton, one of America's Nobel Prize winners, put

¹Delivered November 30th, 1946.

his finger on it when he said that the Jewish problem is "the result of propaganda from some interested source."

At the present time its purpose is to create disunity in America. Its object is to prevent our nation from concentrating its efforts to extend the influence of liberal democracy at home and abroad in the struggle against reaction and obscurantism. The technique is not new. The Nazis employed it most effectively. It is my profound conviction that the American people have had their eyes opened to this insidious device and will know how to deal with it.

Norman Cousins, the editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, not long ago summarized the healthy reaction of the country to the attacks upon the Jew. He wrote: "Of course there is a Jewish problem in America. It is the problem of five million Americans who face the struggle for survival. But primarily it is the problem of saving one hundred and thirty million Americans from the disastrous by-products of anti-Semitism, or, more accurately, saving ourselves from the overall danger of which anti-Semitism is only a portent. Let us not delude ourselves into believing that we can have anti-Semitism and our own safety too."

There you have it. The Jew is only an incident in the problem of anti-Semitism in America. The attack upon the Jew is merely an assault on the front-line trenches of democracy, and I am deeply confident that the American people will recognize it for what it is and will know how to deal with it.

There is, however, another type of Jewish problem that is comparatively new to our experience. It has little, if anything, to do with persecution. It has not been forced upon us—it is entirely of our own making. That is the problem of Jewish secularism—the problem of Jews without Judaism—and it is that problem that is uppermost in my mind this morning. That is the problem that I want to talk about. It is that problem which I consider by far more menacing to Israel and Jewish survival than the problems which have been forced upon us by European bigots. It is that problem which is so pointedly thrust upon us every time we enter a synagogue and observe the conspicuous emptiness of pews that should be crowded with devout worshippers.

If you think that irreligion is not a crucial problem in Jewish life today, I beg of you to think that matter through again.

I said that this phenomenon of Jewish secularism is something new in the epic of our people. It is a fairly recent development. The history of Judaism and

the Jew offers striking testimony to the fact that we were always a *religious* community. If you study the story of our people from the earliest days of our recorded history you will find that Israel always regarded itself as a religious community. That was our uniqueness. The world has deliberately chosen to misunderstand that abused phrase "the chosen people" and to misinterpret the significance of the adjective. Israel did not regard itself as having been chosen for favor or privilege. It regarded itself as having been consecrated for a religious mission, a religious destiny, chosen for the purpose of being God's servants and God's witnesses to humanity. And because of that historical investiture, every Jew by birth was a dedicated member of a priest people whose duty it was by teaching and example to testify before man of God and of His Holy Law.

Moreover, we never allowed any division between religion and life. We never conceded that religion was something to be practiced only on Sabbath days and Holy days. We never regarded piety as a garment to be put on and removed at pleasure. Religion was always co-extensive with life in Jewish faith and practice. That explains why our Bible is much more than a theological treatise; why our religious literature deals with subjects other than speculation about God and the soul and immortality and prayer and repentance. The Jewish Scriptures and Jewish religious literature represent what Israel Zangwill so felicitously called a "glorified sociology" in which provision was made for every situation that confronts the individual in his daily living. Being a Jew meant belonging to "a kingdom of priests and a holy people" whose duty it was to imitate the holiness of God by sanctifying His name in every act and gesture.

Now, what was the result of that type of living, that approach to life and that program of conduct? Well, I need not tell you that among other things, it enabled us to develop a technique for dealing with anti-Semitism.

What do I mean by that? I mean that our religion, and nothing else, gave us tremendous spiritual resources of morale and faith and courage to meet life and its problems heroically and with dignity. Religion developed in the Jew amazing qualities of self-respect and self-esteem which not even the most ingenious torments of persecutors could undermine or disintegrate. It enveloped the inner life of the Jew with an armor so invulnerable that, like that ancient Christian martyr who was flogged by his Roman persecutors, we too could

face our tormentors and exclaim: "Beat on the case of Israel, Israel itself you cannot touch." In every generation it created men and women of the spiritual stature of Rabbi Akiba who, while his living flesh was consumed by flames, could smile and when his disciples asked him how he could endure such torture without flinching he replied: "All my life I have said three times daily in my prayers that I love the Lord with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my might, and now for the first time I have an opportunity of proving my faith by my conduct." To be sure, not every Jew was compelled to test his devotion by the tragic yardstick of martyrdom. Nevertheless it was Judaism, the living faith of Israel, that gave our fathers those qualities of self-esteem, self-respect and unconquerable courage that enabled them in periods as dark as the one that we face today to triumph over their persecutors.

And that faith, too, gave the Jew a high morality and an elevated ethical code. It is curious to note how our detractors, even those who indite the most vitriolic diatribes against the Jew, find themselves perforce obliged to pay tribute to the moral qualities of the Jew as exemplified, for instance, in his beautiful family relations and in the superior quality of the Jewish home. Do you know what the Hebrew word for marriage is? It is "kiddushin" and it means "sanctification." It was the Jew who elevated what among other peoples was considered a biological and legal relationship to a high plane of holiness, emphasizing monogamy as the most sacred relationship that can exist between one man and one woman and deriving from that proposition all the corollaries that made the Jewish home a dwelling place of the spirit of God; the Jewish table an altar of devotion and loving kindness and reverence and piety. And from that spiritual outlook on life there flowered those attributes of character which made the Jew the most outstanding exponent of philanthropy that the world has ever seen. Let me assure you that it is far from accidental that Jewish eleemosynary institutions throughout the world have high standards of service and high ethical motivations. I say it is not accidental: that is an inevitable by-product of the Jewish faith. It comes directly from our religious disciplines; from the laws that you will find in the Bible, in medieval literature and in rabbinical codes dealing with the care, the affection and the consideration that should be shown to a brother or to the stranger in distress.

When, therefore, I deplore the secularization of Jewish life in our day and

insist that it is the most crucial problem which we face, I can call history to witness that the synagogue has always occupied the central position in Jewish life. Religion is the life of Israel. And yet the number of unsynagogued Jews in America today is staggering. Prayer is rapidly becoming a lost art among our people. They do not go to the synagogue and they do not pray at home. They do not send their children to the religious school and they do not provide religious instruction for them at home. Is it any wonder that one grows apprehensive lest it be entirely too easy for some people who do not like us to find facts to support their argument that the Jew has lost his idealism; has lost contact with his faith; that he is grossly materialistic and has thrown overboard the religious ideals which have distinguished him in the eyes of the world. We have a Jewishly ignorant laity. There was never a time in the history of our people when Jews knew so little about their religion and about their religious literature as in our day. Our Jews lack positive convictions about Judaism because they are too ignorant of their faith to have conviction about anything religious. There is no intensity of faith because there is no conviction. Our people cannot read the Bible in the original Hebrew and they do not read it in English, and they object to having their children taught even the little Hebrew necessary to follow the few prayers given in our traditional tongue in the synagogue at a Sabbath service.

We have indignantly abhorred the godlessness of Russia and certainly no group has been more vociferous than the Jews of America in denouncing the paganism of Nazi Germany. I suggest that we ought to save some of that moral indignation for American Jewry.

Now I believe that as a matter of enlightened self-interest it behooves us to call a halt to this steady attrition of Judaism. We ought to be warned by the terrible example of some European societies. If there is anything that emerges clearly from the recent barbarism of Europe it is this: That a people without piety becomes a people without pity. We cannot ignore or neglect the sources of our inspiration and think that we can save ourselves as Jews simply by blowing on our hands. You recall that in the biblical narrative Job's wife urged her husband to curse God and die. We cannot abjure our religion and expect to live. If our lives are not to become stunted and vulgar, if we are not to become a demoralized community in this country, we will have to recapture the sources of Jewish inspiration in every age. We need courage and we need faith

in these trying days. We need a sense of honor and we need a sense of Jewish dignity. We need, above all else, self-esteem to compensate for the factors that are creating inferiority complexes in Jewish lives today.

Tell me, pray, where are we going to get these qualities if not from our faith? If we do not get them there we won't get them anywhere. Certainly it is fatuous and futile to assume for a moment that we can get them by disassociating ourselves from the synagogue. Anti-Semitism is not our greatest problem. In these days when the question of Jewish survival looms large, we ought to ask ourselves: survival for what?

What are you going to do about Jews without Judaism? About a Jewish life that has become denuded of sound Jewish loyalties?

This has not been an easy sermon to preach. No one knows better than the rabbi that preaching this kind of sermon is about as socially effective as shadow-boxing. The people in the pews before the preacher very rarely need the message. It never gets to Garcia. At the same time it is a sermon that must be preached in these days. The rabbi must be true to his office and express with all the sincerity at his command the innermost convictions of his soul.

Amos preached a similar sermon when he preached the one I read to you today. He told Israel that the time would come when there would be a famine in the land, a famine not of bread but of hearing the word of the Lord. His prophecy has been realized in our day. We are the wealthiest Jewish community, not only in the world but in the whole history of the world. There is no famine of bread and no thirst for water in American Israel, but there is a famine of hearing the word of God. Unless that famine is relieved our future is dark and our present is precarious. If we can recapture those Jewish values which have served Jewish life in the past, then, even though enemies league themselves together against us, we can say as did our father Abraham of old: "God is on my side and with Him, although I stand alone, I constitute a majority."

HOW CAN WE FIND HAPPINESS IN THE NEW YEAR?¹

IN contrast to the carnival mood of the secular New Year, Rosh Hashonah is a solemn occasion. Only a deeply religious people, imbued with a sense of the seriousness of life, its opportunity and obligation, could have created this holy day. On no other religious calendar will you find a similar observance. It is a characteristic of human nature to take life and its blessings for granted. The average person is so absorbed in routine pursuits and pastimes, so preoccupied in earning a living and escaping from boredom, that only through a deliberate act of will is his attention focused upon those aspects of living whose significance is fundamental. Rosh Hashonah has for centuries invited the Jew to this type of serious introspection.

Time was, within the memory of most of us assembled here, when the admonition of this occasion to consider the serious side of life was urgently needed. There are few within the sound of my voice tonight who cannot recall that happy, carefree era in which life was predictable, prosperity attainable, security dependent upon one's industry and thrift, and inner harmony mainly a matter of good digestion. The triumphs of applied science had equipped the humblest cottage with more creature comforts than could be found in a king's palace only a few decades ago.

The steady advance of education, communication and transportation had transformed the planet into a neighborhood. Small wonder that we were persuaded of the inevitability of human progress toward the Utopia that was just around the corner.

Those were the days when even a holy day like this, with its imperious summons to seriousness, failed to evoke a responsive mood. Tonight all that is changed. No Rosh Hashonah exhortation is required to bring home to us the solemnity of life in our time. The woes of the world lie heavily upon us as we keep our rendezvous tonight with forty centuries of Israel's history. Tonight no preacher's eloquence is necessary to recall us from Elysian Fields to Sinai's Mountain. With death and destruction raining down in Europe and Asia, with the areas of enlightened and humane living growing smaller day by day, with values precious to the human spirit undergoing outrage and desecration, surely no one in our land tonight needs to be reminded of the gravity of this hour.

¹ Delivered October 2, 1940.

But however grimly the world tragedy has affected the mood and temper of the generality of mankind, to us of the House of Israel its results and implications are vastly more appalling. For not only has the Jew participated in the common anguish of his countrymen in lands despoiled by tyranny, but he has been deliberately singled out for added indignities that exhaust the repertory of persecution. Jewish life has been destroyed in a thousand communities where once it flourished brilliantly. Not since the Babylonian Exile have the sons and daughters of Israel been so violently uprooted and thrust forth as pariahs upon the friendless highways of the world. Pauperism and degradation, torture and banishment have been meted out to our people in lands whose glory they established with gifts of genius and generosity.

It is this double kinship with the tragedy of our time that fills our hearts with sadness. But there is yet another and more intimate factor in our deep concern as we look across the world tonight. To be sure, we are far removed from the actual theater of the world tragedy, but our isolation is only geographic. In thought, in sentiment, in ethical and moral participation, we are not isolated. Nor is isolation possible or even defensible when everything sacred in our religious and political traditions as Americans and Jews is involved in the conflict. The flood tide of historic destiny is carrying America toward events that will affect the lives and fortunes of every man, woman and child among us. The future is veiled in deep uncertainty.

With these reflections crowding upon us tonight, what possible meaning is there in our traditional salutation, "May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for a happy New Year." With the outlook for the future so ominous, with the thoughts and energies of our nation directed toward military preparedness, with war darkening the horizon every way we look and constantly drawing closer and closer, is our customary New Year's greeting this year anything more than a polite formality, a stereotyped formula without the slightest relationship to reality? In all this confusion and uncertainty, is it possible for us to discern any prospects for a happy New Year?

Our answer to that question depends upon our conception of happiness. To some people, happiness consists in the pleasures of the senses. The chief joy of the epicure lies in eating and drinking; the delight of the philosopher in intellectual contemplation. Some make gold their god and their delight increases as their fortune grows. Some covet fame, and find their highest satis-

faction in the applause of the multitude. But the wisest men who have ever lived, have taught us that true happiness can never depend upon temporal things. It is a spiritual quality which can only be achieved by the fulfillment of certain conditions. It must be established upon grounds more permanent than the shifting sands of knowledge, wealth and popularity. It demands inner resources that are beyond the reach of circumstance and fortune.

If you tell me that this formula is difficult of attainment, I agree. When was anything of real worth easy to obtain? If it is difficult to win the ordinary prizes that most men seek, where did we ever get the notion that it is easy to win happiness, the most coveted of all the goals toward which men strive?

What are some of the indispensable factors with which we must deal if we would intelligently seek happiness in the New Year?

In the first place, there is work. Modern psychologists have their disagreements and differences about many aspects of human behavior, but on this they agree—that work is one of the indispensable prerequisites to well-balanced living. It is through his work that an individual relates himself to his fellowmen, finds an outlet for his energies and talents, and makes his contribution to the society of which he is a part. A man's interest in life is lowered or heightened in proportion to his activity. The shortest cut to discontent is laziness.

Much of the personal and domestic unhappiness that we see around us springs from idleness. When a man is absorbed in a task that demands mental effort, emotional interest and physical activity, he is fortified against the assaults of pessimism and despair. His activity sets limits to the time available for brooding and speculation upon real or fancied troubles.

Don't look for daydreamers among men of action. It is the idler who surrenders to moods of moping and fretting and ends up by magnifying actual and fancied troubles out of all proportion to their real size.

One of the most effective ways of putting to rout the fears and worries, the uncertainties and forebodings that take the joy out of life is to find some useful and interesting occupation. If you want corroboration in the Bible for this time-tested proposition, you can find it in the words of the Psalmist: "When thou eatest the labor of thy hands, happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee." Set this down as an axiom: happiness is impossible for an individual who has nothing to do.

Now this does not mean that a man ought to drive himself to a state of exhaustion. Beyond a certain point, work can degenerate into drudgery and make inroads upon other factors in a program for living which are equally important for a well-balanced personality.

And that brings me to the second item in our formula for happiness, which is the cultivation of the simple satisfactions of home and family life. Our industrial civilization has wrought havoc with the solidarity and the serenity of the American home. The machine has enslaved more men than it has set free. The automobile and motion picture have made our generation so independent of the fireside that conversation has become a lost art and self-improvement a neglected virtue. Seeking escape from our own inadequate personalities, we have run away from opportunities to build up a family life that could be beautiful and significant. A home should be something more than a bed, a table and a radio. A dwelling ought to mean more than a parcel of real estate. A fireplace ought to generate the glow of family loyalty and comradeship as well as physical warmth.

You fathers and mothers, are your children simply related to you by the ties of heredity, or are they bound to you in devotion and affection, riveted by companionship and close association?

You sons and daughters, are your parents only financial and social assets, or are they dependable friends and comrades? Are you neglecting precious opportunities that you can never recover, for drawing close to them in confidence and good fellowship?

No nation is stronger than its homes. We Jews for centuries have furnished an example in the cultivation of those domestic virtues which are the backbone of character and the foundation of personal happiness. I venture to assert that if we concentrated half as much on making a success of our homes as we do of our business and pastimes, we would be a far stronger and happier people. I care not what reverses may shatter your prosperity, what disappointments may frustrate your hopes, what misfortunes may darken your horizon, if your home and family life are radiant with the love and loyalty that you have created there, you can face the world undaunted.

What we are dealing with here, of course, are spiritual values, inner resources indispensable for courageous living in a perilous time. And that takes us directly to the third item in our program for happiness which, like the

others, has behind it the testimony of centuries. Your ancestors and mine were just as interested as we moderns in finding happiness and in finding it in this life. One of the distinctive traits of Judaism is that unlike other great world religions, it does not ask the individual to postpone his expectation of happiness until after death. The seers and prophets who formulated our faith did not waste much time speculating on the felicity that lies beyond the stars. They were interested in one world at a time, and the wise counsel which they set down in our sacred literature is intended to show men and women on this earth the paths to contentment and self-realization. And what formula for personal happiness do you find in this literary heritage?

*"Happy is the man that hath not walked
in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stood in the way of sinners,
Nor sat in the seat of the scornful.
But his delight is in the Law of the Lord."*

I think the implications of that verse are fairly obvious. The men who wrote that lived in a turbulent time, when the Fertile Crescent resounded day and night with the clash of embattled armies. In those days, too, there must have been cynics who scoffed at the impracticality of this formula for happiness. But if the centuries have taught us anything, it is that the cynics were wrong and the men who wrote our Bible were right. For they properly understood that the deepest joys that a man can know are those which spring from inner wells of faith and hope, of confidence and trust in a Power that is stronger and more lasting than the temporal might of blustering dictators. They knew that there is a moral law written by God in the hearts of men that will endure long after every edict of Duce and Fuehrer will have been repealed. It was that high religious faith that gave them the serenity and the courage to withstand the evils of their time and become the unconquered conquerors of the spirit of man.

And that faith, my friends, can work in you and me today a miracle of courage and hope. It can give us that resolution and quiet confidence we need as we embark tonight upon the uncharted sea of a New Year. Mussolini and Hitler will not speak the last word. Our civilization will not be liquidated by the brutality of the new paganism.

Do you recall that stirring scene on Mount Carmel, when Elijah alone remained of all God's prophets to oppose the champions of paganism?

"And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind, an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake, a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire, a still, small voice."

Well, the tempests of hate are lashing our planet today. An upthrust of barbarism has convulsed our society to its foundations. The fires of fanaticism are searing the souls of men. But depend upon it, the tumult and the shouting will die away and the still, small voice will again be heard.

Against that day, sustained by an unfaltering faith in God, by the renewed loyalties and loves of our firesides, let us work and hope. In that spirit, we pray that God may grant to us and all mankind, the blessings of peace and freedom and happiness in the New Year.

THE LIGHT THAT PREVAILED¹

I THINK we will all agree that the advocates of fine religion have many reasons for discouragement during these difficult days. With war spreading havoc and ruin in China; with Spain in the throes of a bloody civil conflict; with large areas of Europe flouting the elementary decencies of civilized living; with social and economic problems creating unhappiness and discontent in our own land, the advocates of high religion have ample reasons for deep disappointment. Under the circumstances we all ought to remind ourselves that the dismal inventory of our discouragements is only one side of the picture. No true appraisal of the status of religion in our day can properly leave out the affirmative factors in the situation.

For one thing, we are hearing a great deal less nowadays about sectarianism and a great deal more about religious unity. Faced with a common danger in the rising tide of secularism and atheistic materialism, religious leaders of all denominations are coming more and more to emphasize values and principles in which we have a mutual stake and a united loyalty.

This program tonight affords confirmation and illustration of this new attitude. Not often have a Christian clergyman and a rabbi participated together in the observance of a Jewish religious holiday. It is hardly necessary for me to observe that this act of fellowship does not involve the slightest compromise of religious conviction for either of us. In the first place the principle of religious liberty and freedom of conscience, which this festival of Chanukah commemorates, is equally dear to the hearts of Christians and to the hearts of Jews. Moreover, there is ample historical warrant for Christian participation in a service honoring the memory of the Maccabees. If you will study the records of the early Christian church, you will discover that among the festivals ordained by the church fathers, there was one designated as the Birthday of the Maccabees. It is not difficult to understand the reasons which prompted the founders of Christianity to introduce that holiday. They realized that except for the unyielding loyalty of those ancient Hasmonean warriors, Judaism would have perished and Christianity would never have been born.

In order properly to appreciate the significance of this festival, it may not be amiss to outline briefly its historical background.

¹Delivered December 17, 1938, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

In the second pre-Christian century the Jews living in Palestine were subjects of a Graeco-Syrian tyrant named Antiochus Eppiphanes. Like some of his modern successors in the contemporary scene, Antiochus believed in a totalitarian philosophy of government. He was persuaded that the only way in which he could achieve unity throughout his empire was by insisting on uniformity. He was determined that all his subjects should be of one opinion, one mind and one religion, and he was determined upon a ruthless policy of regimentation in order to achieve his end. If you will turn to the First Book of Maccabees in the Apocrypha, you will read what happened when a company of Syrian soldiers invaded Palestine and marched through the little town of Modin, near Jerusalem, to the public square. Summoning all the inhabitants of the village, they set up an altar and an idol of Zeus-Olympus before the terror-stricken populace and then the captain turned to the aged priest Mattathias and said: "You are the revered head of this community, popular and influential with your people. Tell them to bow down and worship and you shall be counted among the friends of the King." What followed constitutes one of the most thrilling episodes in the history of heroism. The aged priest approached the altar, but instead of prostrating himself before it he hurled the image to the ground and raised the standard of revolt. His son Judah assumed command of the motley army that rallied to the cause of freedom. Just as in our own War of Independence George Washington recruited his soldiers from farmers, factory hands, mechanics and clerks, so Judah Maccabee gathered his warriors from among the ranks of the common people who valued liberty more than life. For three long years the war went on. At no time did the army of the Jewish leader exceed seven thousand men, yet again and again he inflicted decisive defeats upon the overwhelmingly superior numbers of the Graeco-Syrian mercenaries who poured into Palestine to crush the rebellion. Finally, the Maccabean forces triumphed and in the year 165 B.C. Judah entered Jerusalem and rededicated the Sanctuary which had been profaned and despoiled by the enemy.

That, in brief, is the record preserved by history of the events which this festival of Chanukah commemorates.

The unknown historian who wrote the account of the struggle in the First Book of Maccabees, tells us that when the hour was dark, when Mattathias was no more, and the Syrian legions were advancing, then all the loyal Judeans

banded together and “they fought with gladness the battle of Israel.” What does that mean? What was the battle of Israel which the Maccabees so enthusiastically waged? Was it just another of those interminable wars which ravaged Palestine from its earliest history down to the time of the Roman conquest? Is it only the amazing victory of Judah Maccabee, achieved as it was against overwhelming odds which constitutes the theme of our Chanukah festival? Most assuredly not! The martial chapters of the Bible are filled with stories of the victorious battles of ancient Israel, yet there are no festivals to commemorate them. King David’s military successes added territory and wealth and power to the early Hebrew commonwealth, yet there is no holiday to celebrate his fame. Why then do we honor the Maccabees?

Because they fought for religious liberty. They battled for freedom of conscience. They died for the right to call their souls their own. Every schoolboy in America is familiar with the resounding words of the Declaration of Independence in which the Founding Fathers of our Republic declared: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” These truths which the framers of our Constitution declared to be self-evident were by no means conceded in the ancient world. If they are today in every democracy regarded as the cornerstone of freedom and justice, it is because men have sacrificed their lives, their treasures and their fortunes in order to secure them for posterity. And that is precisely what the Maccabees did, and let it be remembered that they did it for the first time in history. The cause for which they fought was something new, something unique, something unprecedented. Others, to be sure, had fought for land, for dominion, for empire. From time immemorial wars had been waged for conquest, for booty, for treasure, but the Maccabees, for the first time in human history, proved that there are spiritual values in human life which men prize more dearly than gold or gain. They demonstrated that there are some things upon which mankind at its best sets greater store than creature comfort and material possessions—standards of morality which the brutish Syrians were undermining, ideals of living which regimentation destroyed; freedom of thought which a totalitarian tyrant was determined ruthlessly to suppress. These things were insufferable to a chosen people—a people chosen not for privilege or preferment, but for

sacrificial service on behalf of God's Kingdom on earth. How I wish that the world might understand *that* meaning of Israel's selection!

Yes, it was because of their fidelity to spiritual values, which the brutal hordes of a godless paganism threatened to obliterate, that those ancient Maccabees "fought with gladness the battle of Israel."

That battle of Israel has become the battle of mankind everywhere. In every place where tyranny crushes the human spirit and brute force lays impious hands upon religious liberty, the battle of those ancient Maccabees is resurrected and renewed. It is mankind's eternal struggle against obscurantism and despotism. It is the never-ending conflict between civilization and barbarism. Those ancient Maccabees initiated and gave great impetus to a struggle which has been carried on through the centuries and even now is being waged against mighty powers that seek to throttle thought and conscience, and bind chains of tyranny around the hard-won liberties of men.

This week throughout the world, in lands of despotism and in lands of freedom, observant Jews will kindle tapers in their homes and commemorate in song and story that ancient victory against an overwhelming force. May the memory of that struggle and the inspiration which we draw from it give us and all men who fight the good fight, the faith and courage to carry on for the victory that cometh "not by might and not by brute strength but by My spirit, saith the Lord."

THE REAL WASHINGTON¹

IT is the lot of all great men not only to be misunderstood, but what is worse, to be misrepresented. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the treatment that has been accorded the Father of our Country. No American has had so many books written about him, and no hero has been the subject of so many fabrications. It is only recently that scholarly historians have rescued George Washington from the very real danger of becoming a plaster saint, by unravelling from the story of his life, embalmed in the old histories, all the fantastic wrappings of myth and legend to reveal him in his true character as a thoroughly human and uncommonly gifted man.

Lest it appear sacrilegious to anyone unfamiliar with the new knowledge we have about Washington to hear him thus portrayed, may I submit that inasmuch as it was a minister who was responsible in the first place for the distorted picture of Washington preserved in the old accounts, it ought not to be taken amiss if another minister ventures to correct the original misrepresentations. Most of you are doubtless familiar with the legends told about the youth of Washington—how he chopped down the cherry tree and manfully acknowledged his delinquency, how he was about to set out to sea when he saw the tearful face of his mother and ordered the servants to unpack his trunk because he would not go and break her heart—these and similar tales equally pretty and moralistic constituted for generations the biographical data of George Washington with which every school child in America was assiduously indoctrinated. A careful scrutiny of historical evidence has disclosed with uncontradictable certainty the fictitious character of these stories. They were all the invention of the amazingly fertile imagination of the Reverend Mason Weems, a pious and well-meaning minister who wrote the earliest biography of the Father of our Country for the instruction and edification of school children. In that same biography Weems also wrote that when George Washington left school he parted from the other boys in tears for, said the good parson, “He had lived among them in the spirit of a brother. He was never guilty of so brutish a practice as fighting and he never allowed them to fight. If he could not disarm their passions by argument, he would instantly go to the master.” Well, if any of young America is listening to me this afternoon, I leave it to them to imagine the popularity of a boy who would act like

¹Delivered February 21, 1937, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

that. I know that in my day there was no more contemptuous epithet that school boys could call one another than "snitcher" and it was reserved for sissies who ran and told teacher instead of fighting it out in the school yard. I am not recommending fisticuffs as a sensible way of settling an argument, but it seems to me that Rupert Hughes is probably correct when he observes that "if the story Parson Weems tells is true, the most puzzling thing about George Washington is that he grew up to be a soldier instead of a parson like Weems."

These anecdotes reduce the colossal figure of the Father of our Country to the diminutive proportions of a sanctimonious and rather obnoxious prig. How infinitely more admirable the man appears when divested of that masquerade. It is related that Oliver Cromwell once said to the artist who was doing his portrait, "Paint me as I am, warts and all." And when we see the real Washington as he steps out of the frame in which for so long he has been caricatured, you behold a stalwart, dynamic man of flesh and blood, a man who loved life and rejoiced in the vigor of energetic living, a man who wrote reams of insincere, bombastic and worse than mediocre poetry during the "puppy-love" stage of his youth, who loved a good horse race and rode hard to the hunt, who was not averse to gambling at cards or indulging in strong drink, who was occasionally profane and enjoyed the company of attractive ladies, a man who not only slew the King's soldiers but who to his dying day murdered the King's English. If these be faults, let sentimental pietists make the most of them. But let them remember that it was only because Washington was so thoroughly human that he was able so thoroughly to command the devotion of his fellow-men and emerge even from that distinguished group who were his contemporaries, "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

When the real Washington is thus discovered, the first thing that impresses us about him is that he was a man of unimpeachable character. While the stories of his physical courage have by no means been exaggerated, perhaps too little attention has been devoted to his moral courage. There have been greater generals than Washington, although he was a military strategist of no mean order. Frederick the Great declared that Washington's military genius during the ten days following the Battle of Trenton was unparalleled in military history. He was not the greatest statesman that ever lived, although his

leadership was a powerful factor in moulding the Colonies into a united federation. Even as President of the United States, those who claim for him supremacy might successfully be challenged by counterclaims on behalf of others who have occupied that high office. But as a man of consummate character, a patriot whose enlightened loyalty created a nation, Washington is outstanding. That task required moral courage. It took spiritual stamina to hold fast to his dream of democracy in the face of disappointments and difficulties, the jealousies of subordinates and the quibblings of Congress, the lack of adequate resources for his army and the constant sniping of powerful Tories. Yet hold to his course he did, overcoming finally the resistance of the most intransigent, to win as a reward—not for himself but for the nation he loved and served so well—the birthright of freedom.

Moreover, there is another and perhaps the most important aspect of Washington's genius which, far from having been adequately emphasized, is generally passed over in silence. Washington was the most audacious rebel of his day. Take a good long look at that trait in his character, for without it the man remains entirely misunderstood. Now as a general rule you do not find rebels and revolutionaries among the rich and powerful in any society. It is not easy to turn against a social order, an economic system, a political state in which you personally enjoy tremendous wealth, prestige, power and all the benefits that these advantages afford. Yet Washington did precisely this very thing. He was one of the wealthiest men in the Colonies—perhaps the wealthiest. He owned great estates along the Potomac and elsewhere. His home at Mount Vernon was one of the finest and best appointed in Virginia. He had considerable investments in slaves, agricultural products, mercantile ventures and other enterprises in which investors of the period were accustomed to employ their surplus wealth. Yet this man chose to become a rebel, to hazard his life, his fortune and his sacred honor—everything that meant comfort and security—for the sake of an ideal. That Patrick Henry and James Otis and Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine should have been among the revolutionaries does not excite our surprise and wonder. But that so eminently substantial and superlatively conservative an individual as George Washington should draw his sword against his King and a government to which he had sworn allegiance is truly astonishing. That circumstance alone reveals him in more heroic fashion than all the legends and myths that have ever been invented

about him. It puts him in the company of the great rebels of humanity who have made this world a better and a nobler place—Moses, who rebelled against Egyptian tyranny; Isaiah and Jeremiah and Jesus, who rebelled against the political and ecclesiastical narrowness of their day.

Sometimes one really wonders whether the wrong people have not been exploiting the memory of Washington in support of the very things which would most have aroused his opposition. Perhaps the very causes for which the Daughters of the American Revolution and the hundred per cent patrioteers invoke the memory of Washington, would be in the category which Washington found so intolerable in his own day and which made him not a defender of the status quo, but the most implacable and radical revolutionary of his age. What a supreme illustration he affords us of high devotion to an ideal! Even though he knew that as a traitor to his King his life and property were forfeit to the Crown, even though it meant seven long years of absence from those he loved best and from the scenes that were closest to his heart, he made the supreme renunciation for the sake of an ideal that was more precious to him than anything that life afforded.

*"We know the cost and yet our gifts we strew,
Our life blood and our tears to feed the lamp
God orders us to bear in front of you."*

Again there is another illustration of the way in which Washington has been unfairly exploited for purposes that are as obvious as they are undoubtedly sincere. Probably the best known quotation from George Washington is one from his Farewell Address dealing with entangling foreign alliances. Until recent years it vied with Webster's reply to Hayne and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address for a place on the graduation program of every rustic schoolhouse. Today it has become the theme song of every isolationist in the land. Washington delivered that message in 1797. The Union consisted of sixteen struggling, perplexed, enfeebled and sparsely inhabited states with a total population of less than three million. Europe was embroiled in constant warfare. France was persistently urging American participation in reciprocity for the assistance given the Colonies during the Revolution. Under such circumstances the wisdom of Washington's admonition is undebatable.

One does not have to wonder whether Washington would be an isolationist

today. One knows that he would not be. He was a forward-looking man. He not only believed in progress but he did much to accelerate it. He organized the disjointed, isolated and bickering states into a firm union on the basis of the independence of each but the interdependence of all. Today our whole world—thanks to scientific ingenuity and technological efficiency—is smaller by far than was the entire Union in Washington's day. Then it took months to travel from New York to Georgia. Today one can journey around the world in a few days, and a whisper in the Senate is heard immediately in Paris, Bombay, Rome and Moscow. In such a world isolation is unthinkable, impossible. The World War ought to have convinced the most obstinate diehard that in the modern world no people can live unto itself alone. The nation which insists today upon maintaining a policy of exclusiveness and absolute sovereignty not only thwarts world progress, but injures the best interests of its own people as well. To participate in all the benefits which accrue from international relations without recognizing any corresponding responsibilities is to pursue an opportunist career that Washington would have sternly repudiated.

And finally, let me observe that it was no accident that the National Council of Christians and Jews designated the Sabbath nearest the birthday of the Father of our Country as Brotherhood Day throughout the nation. Today all over America Protestants and Catholics and Jews in radio addresses, public meetings and pulpit exchanges are uniting to emphasize the essential unity that binds us all together in a common allegiance to our beloved country. I doubt whether there is a single project in American life today to which Washington would more readily have given his wholehearted support than this. The bigot who invokes the name of Washington on behalf of race hatred or religious prejudice, desecrates his memory. During the trying days of the Revolution, Protestant, Catholic and Jew together won our freedom with their blood. No less than Robert Morris, the Philadelphia Protestant, did Haym Solomon, the Philadelphia Jew, lay his fortune at the feet of the Commander-in-Chief. There was no room in the heart of this great American for bigotry. He realized what many lilliputian politicians and misguided patriots fail to comprehend, that unity does not mean uniformity. Just as an orchestra made up of a great many different instruments achieves its finest harmonies by blending the quality of each in a single symphony, so a nation achieves its

greatest strength and culture through the contribution of all its differing races and sects to the general weal. The only thing of which George Washington was intolerant was intolerance. As we gratefully commemorate his life and achievements, let us remember that the true test of our patriotism consists not in giving lip worship to his name, but in fostering and strengthening those ideals to which he dedicated his life—moral courage, devotion to liberty, and good will among men—that the America he fashioned may remain forever “The land of the free and the home of the brave.”

IF I WERE A CHRISTIAN PREACHER TODAY¹

A RABBI'S EASTER SERMON

IN speaking to you on the subject "If I Were a Christian Preacher Today," let me assure you that I approach my theme in a spirit of profound reverence. The modern rabbi is no stranger to the sacred literature of Christianity. Moreover, as a student of comparative religions, anthropology and sociology, he combines with reverence for religious truth a wholesome respect for the historical method. Consequently, it might be of interest to hear what a rabbi might say on the theme of Easter were he a Christian preacher today.

If I were a Christian preacher on this Easter Sunday, I should select as the text for my sermon, out of the rich storehouse of New Testament inspiration, that stirring verse from the Book of Revelations, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." John wrote those words on the bleak convict island of Patmos—the Devil's Island of the ancient world. Encompassed by the relentless ocean, with every means of escape effectively cut off, one can understand how even the stoutest heart might grow despondent there and utterly forlorn. But John had inner resources which overleaped that constricted environment. He had gotten hold of a truth that gave him access to a spiritual realm whose horizons were infinite. And so he wrote those immortal words which not only set forth his own unconquerable faith, but which may serve us as challenge and incentive in the pursuit of truth. "Behold! I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

Now as a Christian preacher, I should reveal the implications of that thought for the discouraged and heavy-laden, the defeated and the beaten in life's relentless battle, and try to point out that every man holds within him unlimited possibilities for recreating and reshaping his destiny and his fortunes. Every man is somewhat greater, nobler, more heroic than he himself has ever dreamed. He carries within him tremendous possibilities for high achievement—if only he could open the appropriate door! America in all its beauty existed long before the little caravel of Columbus found it. It had to be discovered. Marconi and Edison did not increase the sum total of matter or energy in the universe by so much as a single atom. The elements they used were all here when Washington camped at Valley Forge, when William the

¹ Delivered March 28, 1937, over coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company.

Conqueror landed in England, when Imperial Caesar ruled in Rome, aye, when the first anthropoid ape climbed down from his jungle tree. All that Marconi and Edison did was to open the door and find them.

During the last century our western world has been rushing along the highway of achievement with dizzy rapidity. Our conquests of nature on land and sea and in the air have been astounding. The fondest and most fantastic visions of medieval wizards and ingenious utopians fade into insignificance before the actual accomplishments of modern technology and scientific discovery. But our souls have not kept pace with our bodies. Not only is the spiritual life of man today far out-distanced by his pace in the physical world, but what is of equal concern to us as religionists, the institutions of organized religion lag far behind. The doors of progress have been open wide, no man has shut them; but religion has not walked through.

Now, one might understand this recalcitrance on the part of religion, if walking through those doors compelled a man to surrender his faith in God and in the ethical and moral ideals which are shared by all our churches and synagogues. Surely today no one, even among the most orthodox, would defend the practice of child-sacrifice in religion. Yet at one time human sacrifice was actually a cornerstone of religious practice. But someone opened a door—mankind walked through and left infanticide behind. If religion today is failing to enlist the militant and crusading enthusiasm of people of enlightenment and intelligence, it is because it constitutes in so many instances an obsolete irrelevance in modern life. All around it are wide-open doors beckoning, urging, pleading for it to walk through; doors opened by anthropology, by psychology, by astrophysics, by history, by chemistry and all the social sciences. But Religion is sitting on its haunches looking very solemn and refusing to move.

Now if I were a Christian minister today and I still had any congregation left after I had said these things, I would take them on a personally conducted tour, for which I had qualified myself in advance, through one or two of these doors. On this Easter Sunday when all Christendom is celebrating the glorious and universal theme of the renewal of life and of hope, I should walk with my people through the doors of history and the scientific study of the Bible. I would explain to them sympathetically and patiently that to trace back an institution to its primitive source does not by any means discredit or mini-

mize the spiritual implications with which it is today invested. I would reveal to them what the patient researches of scholarly historical investigations disclose—that the Easter festival and the Jewish Passover have a common background. In nearly all the major religions of mankind you find spring festivals and mid-winter festivals dedicated to nature gods who were believed to have control over life and death. Easter takes its name from a pagan Anglo-Saxon divinity known as Eostre, a goddess of spring, associated with the vernal equinox. It was the custom among pagan peoples to offer sacrifices to the goddess Eostre in the springtime in order to induce fertility in their fields and their flocks. The Easter rabbit and the Easter egg still persist as symbols of fecundity associated with the observance of the Eostre festival. When men passed from the nomadic to the agricultural stage of civilization, they found themselves more dependent than ever upon the favor of the gods. The life of the farmer encourages a religious attitude. He soon learns that although he may carefully plow his fields and weed his crop, although he may spend laborious hours and tireless energy on the soil, unless he is favored by fructifying rain and warm sunshine—gifts beyond his power to create—his work will go unrewarded, his effort will have been in vain. And so from the very earliest beginnings of civilization, you find farmers not only creating definite religious rites and ceremonies associated with their vocation, but, moreover, in every age you will find that farmers constitute a very religious element in the population.

The festival of Easter, therefore, began as a spring agricultural festival. It spoke of the resurrection of nature after the long sleep of winter. When, warmed by the first rays of spring sunshine, the flowers and the shrubs and the trees and the grass began again to paint the landscape with their laughing colors, when the rivulets were freed from the icy grip of winter, what more natural than that the early progenitors of the race should have set apart a special day of rejoicing for the emancipation of nature from the stern rule of King Frost.

Now St. Paul and those who assisted him to propagate the Christian faith were all Jews—moreover, they were practical men. They realized that in order to make their new faith—which began as a Jewish sect—into an all-conquering religion, they would have to enlist the support of the pagan world. And so they made compromises with paganism. They made concessions to

the doctrines and cults of Mithra and Hellenism which flourished in the Mediterranean world. They wedded the Jewish elements of early Christianity to the pagan elements of the heathen religions practiced by the majority of their neighbors, in order to make Christianity more attractive and more acceptable, and so afford an easy transition from the native cult to the new faith. The result was the miraculous story of the open tomb and the resurrection from death to life everlasting. Take away the miraculous element and what you have left is the tragic figure of an heroic Jewish prophet whose cruel martyrdom extended the list of victims of man's inhumanity to man.

Now if I were a Christian preacher, I would present these facts documented with the elaborate evidence that scientific study has made available. And I would go on to show how as a result of the legends and myths which were incorporated into the New Testament, the Jews from whom Jesus sprang have been cruelly treated by people calling themselves Christians. No one familiar with the new knowledge of the Bible—and every minister ought to know it—can any longer believe that the Jews crucified Jesus. The best Christian scholarship—and I wish that I had time to quote Christian authorities on this subject—has demonstrated the fallacy of this accusation. The Gospels were written years after the event. The earliest New Testament documents are the Epistles of St. Paul written between 47 and 54. The Gospels abound in contradictions. St. Paul never knew Jesus. The three synoptic Gospels, Mark, Matthew and Luke, were written some time between 65 and 95. Not one of them was written by an eye-witness of the events they recount. Neither Jesus nor any of his disciples wrote a single word of the New Testament. Peter and John, Jesus' most intimate apostles, are characterized in Acts as "ignorant and unlettered." Paul never knew him. The New Testament was written originally in Aramaic, the language of Jesus and his fellow Jews, and two whole generations elapsed before it was first translated into Greek, with such deliberate misrepresentations about the Jews as might be expected from zealots exasperated at the stubborn refusal of Israel to accept his messiahship.

There is an open door accessible to all fair-minded students into this gallery of historical research. As a Christian minister I should feel obligated to call it to the attention of my people and to students in theological seminaries training for the ministry.

It is high time to junk the ammunition from the old arsenal of medieval

bigotry and obscurantism. The establishment of good-will between Jew and Christian is one of the most important tasks of our age. Our conquests of nature are mighty and glorious, but what shall they profit us if we suffer bigotry and malice and ill-will to rend our civilization asunder. Mutual respect founded on knowledge, understanding and liberality of spirit is the only permanent basis of social unity. The door stands wide open—and if I were a Christian preacher I would lead my people through it.

The historical material referred to in the body of this discourse is the result of research mainly by Christian scholars. A list of references is herewith appended for the benefit of those who wish to do some reading on this subject.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- Angus, S. *Mystery Religions and Christianity*.
Barnes, H. E. *The Twilight of Christianity*.
Carpenter, E. *The Origins of the Christian Religion*.
Case, S. J. *The Historicity of Jesus*.
 The Social Origins of Christianity.
 (ed.) *Studies in Early Christianity*.
Conybeare, F. C. *The Historical Christ*.
 Myths, Magic and Morals.
Hall, G. S. *Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Modern Psychology*.
Klausner, J. *Jesus of Nazareth*.
Robertson, J. M. *Pagan Christs: Christianity and Mythology*.
Wallis, W. D. *Messiahs: Pagan and Christian*.

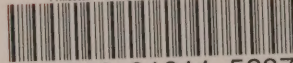
DATE DUE

JUL 1 1996

Printed
in USA

HIGHSMITH #45230

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01011 5287